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3) Joe Frazier
4) Mike Tyson

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3) Jack Dempsey
4) Rocky Graziano

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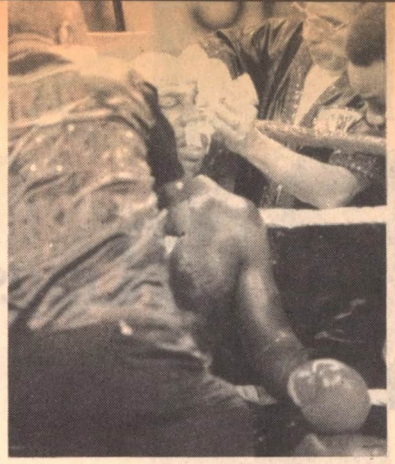
Contents

June 1993



page 35

Features

18 *THE RING'S* EXCLUSIVE PHOTO QUIZ
Test Your Boxing IQ

20 THE BEST OF A NATION
This Month: Ireland's All-Time Top 10
by Patrick Myler

22 IN MEXICO, THERE'S MORE THAN JUST J.C. SUPERSTAR
Meet Miguel Angel Gonzalez, Ricardo Lopez, Victor Rabanales, & Julio Borboa
by Bruce Williams & Steve Farhood

28 BRITISH FEATHERWEIGHT KING PAUL HODKINSON
Will America Go Loco For Hoko?
by Patrick Myler

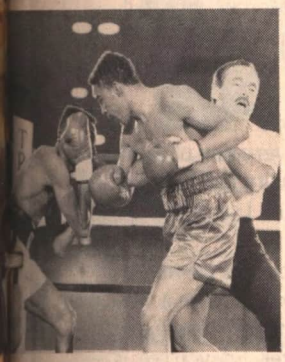
30 THE WASTED CAREER OF RAY MERCER
Not Being All That He Can Be
by Joseph C. Tintle

35 JAMES TONEY CRUSHES IRAN BARKLEY
Making His Anger Work For Him
by Mike O'Hara

38 NOW THAT KENNEDY McKINNEY'S CLEAN . . .
Can He Clean Up The Jr. Feather Division?
by Robert Cassidy

42 HOLY UNIFICATION, BATMAN, WHEN ARE YOU GONNA FIGHT THE JOKER?
by Jeff Ryan

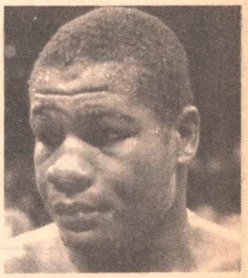
46 THE STORY OF THE "ST. PAUL PHANTOM"
Why Mike Gibbons Couldn't Win The Big One
by George Salvador



page 38

Color Centerfold

40 LeROY NEIMAN RETURNS TO *THE RING*



page 42

Ringside Reports And Analyses

50 FIGHTER OF THE MONTH & RINGSIDE REPORTS

Ratings

10 THE RING'S INTERNATIONAL RATINGS & RECORDS
70 WBC, WBA, & IBF RATINGS

Departments

4 RINGSIDE
6 COME OUT WRITING
8 ROUND ONE
14 RYAN OUT LOUD *by Jeff Ryan*
16 NEW FACES: Heavyweight Jeremy Williams
26 BATTLE OF THE LEGENDS: Evander Holyfield vs. Michael Spinks
32 TIME CAPSULES
48 WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS
72 THE RING CLASSIC: Courage: Can A Fighter Be Yellow? *by Lester Bromberg*
78 LOOKING AHEAD *by Robert Cassidy & Steve Farhood*

Ringside

In this issue of *The Ring,* it's my pleasure to reintroduce one of the magazine's best friends, renowned artist LeRoy Neiman. Several months ago, Dave Gerhardt, our director of marketing, asked Neiman if he'd be interested in drawing another cover for us. His answer was an enthusiastic yes, but he wanted to wait until the right subject came along. After all, an artist needs inspiration.

"There's something to admire about boxers," Neiman told *The Ring* in 1990. "They're all very special people. Their faces have been molded by punches. When you get to a fighter, you have to get to that part that makes him different. That shows something special."

When Riddick Bowe won the world heavyweight title by defeating Evander Holyfield, Neiman sensed he had watched someone both different and special. The result is the cover of this issue, Neiman's fifth for *The Ring,* and his first in 16 years.

It won't be 16 years before we ask him again.

***

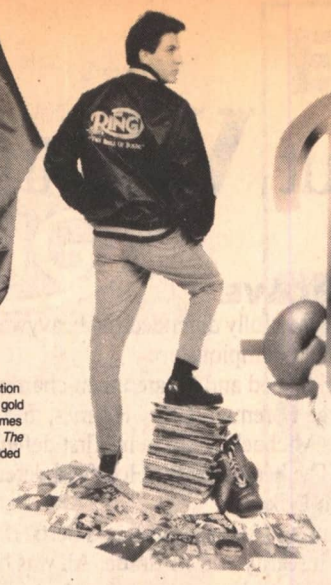
About some of those who work on the magazine *every* month: At 9 p.m. on the night of February 6, Associate Editor Joseph C. Tintle could have been sitting on his butt, like most of the 700 journalists who were at Madison Square Garden covering the Riddick Bowe-Michael Dokes title fight. Instead, he snuck into the dressing room area, where he overheard manager Jack Dell screaming at Ray Mercer, who had just lost to Jesse Ferguson. Tintle's story (page 30) reveals that one-sided conversation, and serves as an example of why most arenas station beefy security guards by the dressing rooms.

Associate Editor Robert Cassidy profiles IBF junior featherweight champion Kennedy McKinney (page 38), who battles his addiction to cocaine every day of his life. When Bobby finished his outstanding piece, I joked that his specialty had become stories on fighters who have overcome drugs or street crime. Then I sadly realized it wasn't Bobby, but rather boxing.

In our "New Faces" feature, Associate Editor Ed Maloney introduces power-punching heavyweight sensation Jeremy Williams (page 16). Once or twice a week, I receive a phone call or a tape from a manager hyping a candidate for "New Faces." When I assigned Williams to Maloney, he countered with a snicker. Ed, you see, is extremely difficult to impress. But after watching Williams and talking to him, he began touting the prospect. That's when I knew I had made a good choice.

Holy Double Entendre! Managing Editor Jeff Ryan wields a sharp and wicked wit, and, as his story on Riddick "Batman" Bowe suggests (page 42), he smoothly applies that wit to his work. Where, you might wonder, does Jeff get his marvelously original angles? Ask him and he'll tell you that all of his *good* ideas are his. *Bad* ideas? Farhood's fault.

Steve Farhood
Editor-in-Chief



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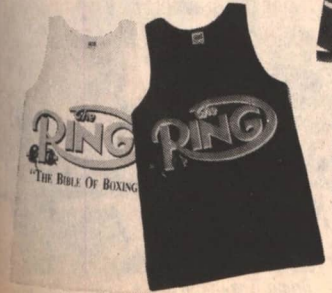

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Come Out Writing

BOOS FOR BOWE

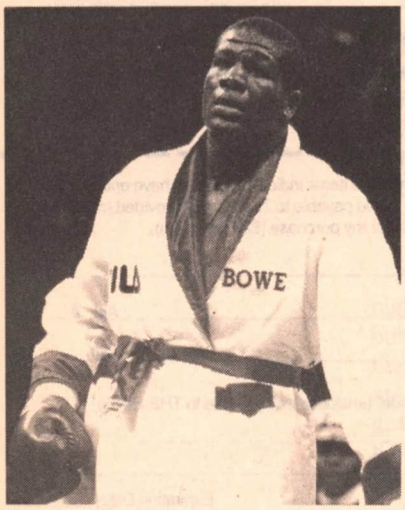
Riddick Bowe has successfully defended the heavyweight title once, but in my eyes, he's already lost the championship.

For months, Bowe ridiculed and berated then-champion Evander Holyfield for fighting men like George Foreman, Larry Holmes, and Bert Cooper, and then he wins the title and fights Michael Dokes in his first defense. If that isn't hypocritical, I don't know what is. The heavyweights Holyfield defended against—and defeated—would have beaten Dokes.

Bowe claims Muhammad Ali as his idol and hero. If that's true, then he should try and duplicate Ali's integrity and fortitude. Ali was humorous and brash, and whether you liked him or not, he was loaded with charisma and vitality. In contrast, Bowe sounds like a smug, self-centered, overgrown child.

Ali might have allowed himself to be stripped of the title for moral or religious reasons, but to allow himself to be stripped because he wanted to renege on a signed contract? I don't think so. You may seek to fill those enormous shoes, Riddick Bowe, but you'll never do it. You don't have the class, charm, or boxing ability that Ali had. Furthermore, if the two of you were to meet in the ring, with both of you in your primes, he'd hand you your head inside of seven rounds.

TERRY M. McCULLOUGH
Sterling Heights, MI



Is Bowe ducking Lewis?

I have to congratulate the WBC on its decision to strip Riddick Bowe of the heavyweight title. The WBC had no alternative. Lennox Lewis was the number-one contender for the crown. The Englishman's second-round annihilation of Razor Ruddock convinced a vast boxing audience that he should've gotten the first shot at Bowe.

I don't blame Rock Newman for having Bowe take on Michael Dokes. After all, Lewis whipped Bowe into quitting at the 1988 Olympics. I also understand Newman and Bowe want to make money, but how can they even consider super purses if Bowe doesn't prove himself a worthy champion?

Until he steps into the ring with Lewis, I'll consider him "Chicken" Bowe.

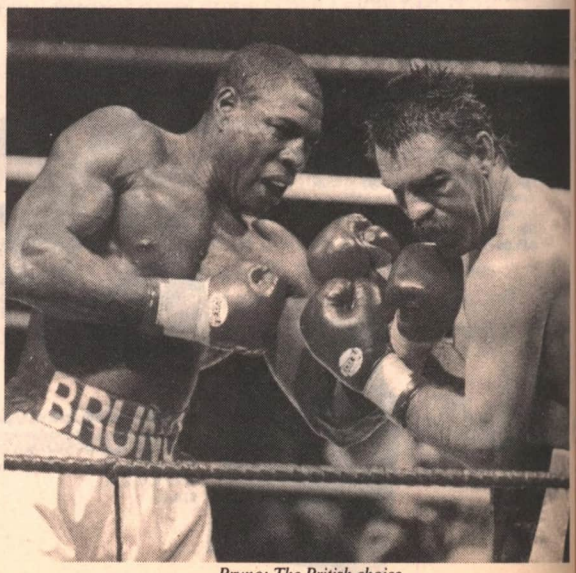
NATHANIEL CASTILLO
Sacramento, CA

BRAVO FOR BRUNO

This is to Jeff Ryan, the Anglophile who, in your March 1993 issue, informed us that he has never been to England (*"The Ring* Explains The Popularity Of Frank Bruno . . . Or At Least Tries To"). We aren't fooled by your pretense of "liking" us, Jeff. We get the joke. It's an old one.

Sure we like big Frank Bruno. He's a nice bloke, and we like nice blokes. Old ladies like him. In England, we'll turn out to cheer him on. Boxing aficionados in our green and pleasant land don't really expect him to win the world title. He's a big, strong lad. That's all. If he fights for the title again and gets knocked out, as is likely, it will at least be another million quid in his pocket. And who says he won't get lucky? Ask Mike Tyson or Tim Witherspoon if Frank can punch. After all, does anyone in your country envision old, big, fat, *nice bloke* George Foreman, or just plain old and fat Larry Holmes, winning back the title?

M. BATES
Worcester, MA
(formerly of Manchester, England) ■



Bruno: The British choice

Volume 72, No. 6 June 1993

THE RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

Founded 1922

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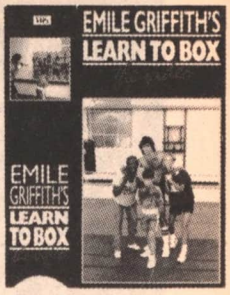
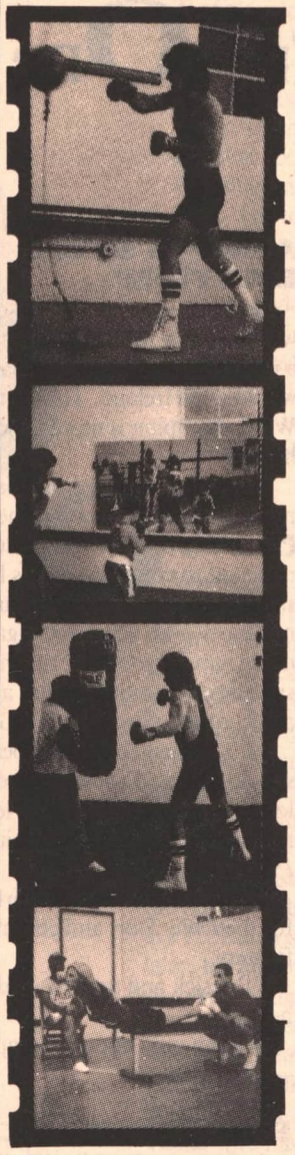
EMILE GRIFFITH'S LEARN TO BOX THE VIDEO





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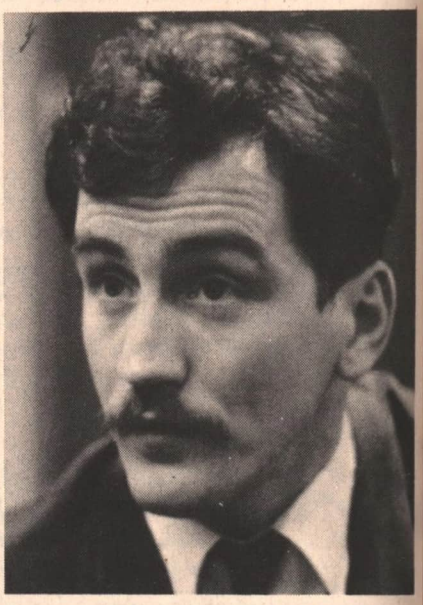
Round One

McGuigan: On the tube



BARRY'S STILL BATTLIN'

During his run as a world-class featherweight, Barry McGuigan was hyped with a ridiculous burden as the man who would unite Ireland. Today, the former WBA champion is more concerned with himself.

McGuigan surfaced on this side of the pond in January, as a commentator for Prime Network. He was understandably reluctant to comment on his losing a libel suit brought by his former manager, Barney Eastwood, who McGuigan claimed made him fight Steve Cruz in 1986 despite a perforated ear drum and a serious ankle injury. Cruz took McGuigan's title.

"It's in the Court of Appeals and should be heard within the next few months," McGuigan said. "Unfortunately, if I lose [the appeal], it means I lose every penny I earned, which comes to about $1.6-million. It could be devastating, but I'm keeping my fingers crossed and praying, *Please, God, please.*"

In the meantime, he's working as a TV commentator, writing a weekly column for the *Daily Star,* and continuing his attempt to form a union for European fighters.

"I'm sick and tired of reading sad stories about boxers ending up skint [broke]," he said.

We can only hope he escapes the same fate.

—Phil Woolever

Cochrane: Champ for 4½ years

RED COCHRANE, 1915-1993

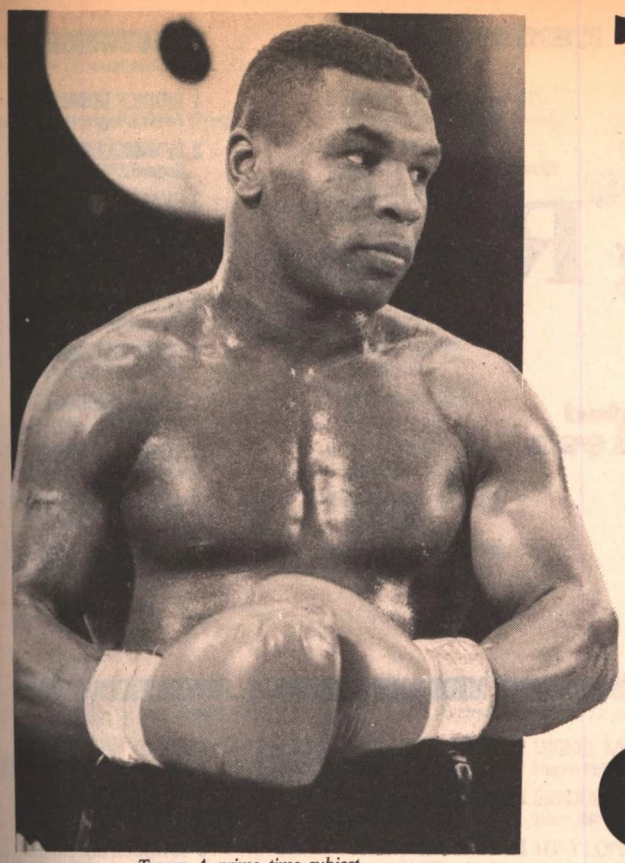
In January, Freddie "Red" Cochrane, world welterweight champion from July 1941 to February 1946, died of Alzheimer's disease in Union, New Jersey. He was 77.

The length of Cochrane's reign—a division record—is misleading. The morning after he won the title by outpointing 4-1 favorite Fritzie Zivic, the champion received his draft notice. He served in the Navy during World War II, and lost the title in his first defense, a fourth-round kayo loss to Marty Servo.

The Servo bout was Cochrane's last; he retired with a mark of 73-36-8 (27).

Cochrane, who was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, learned the game at the feet of the legendary Mickey Walker. While the 5'7½" New Jersey clubfighter was limited, he displayed his toughness in bouts vs. the likes of Rocky Graziano, Tippy Larkin, Lew Jenkins, and Ray Miller.

As his co-manager, Willie Gilzenberg, once said, "He ain't never been fed no bums."



Tyson: A prime time subject

THE SINGING REFEREE

On a Madison Square Garden-promoted fight card in January, referee Seth Rubinstein was the busiest man at The Paramount. He worked Lamar Parks-Ricky Thomas. He worked Derrell Coley-Angel Torres. He worked Lonnie Bradley-David Woods. And most impressive of all, he sang the national anthem.

This wasn't some kind of hokey promotional gimmick. Rubinstein, who is based in Saratoga, New York, is a formally trained tenor who sings professionally under the name of Seth Evans.

For the record, he remembered every word, hit all the high notes, and finished with a flurry. It was an impressive performance—even if there was blood on his shirt.

Rubinstein: The singing ref

TYSON: THE MOVIE

In February, NBC treated viewers to *Fallen Champ: The Untold Story Of Mike Tyson*. It was coincidence that the two-hour documentary aired on the weekend before the Indiana Court of Appeals heard Alan Dershowitz argue on behalf of the former heavyweight champion. But the timing served to remind us just how wild Tyson's ride has been.

The first half of Academy Award-winning documentarian Barbara Kopple's work included meticulous research and riveting footage of Tyson's teen years. Unfortunately, the story hit a wall as soon as the focus shifted to Desiree Washington and Tyson's rape conviction. Old news. The testimony was public record, and most people—especially boxing fans—had closely followed the trial.

That aside, *Fallen Champ* was tense, intriguing, and tightly edited. That it played on prime time network television says more about Tyson's sensational story than any film clip or sound bite ever could.

—Steve Farhood

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Venezuela's **Vicente Paul Rondon**, who reigned as WBA light heavyweight champion from 1971 to 1972, died at age 54 in Caracas. Alcoholism was listed as part of the cause . . . Making a comeback at age 37 is former WBA heavyweight champion **Gerrie Coetzee**, who hasn't fought in seven years. Why, we presume the South African's thinking goes, should all the *other* old-timers make all the money? . . . In our April 1993 issue, you read of the reunion of WBA junior welterweight champion **Morris East** and his father, **John East**, whom the fighter hadn't seen since his infancy. On January 12, East lost the title to **Juan Coggi**. Ten days later, his father died of prostate cancer at age 47 . . . According to police in Albuquerque, New Mexico, former USBA junior bantamweight champion **Johnny Tapia** was arrested and charged with driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol in connection with a head-on traffic accident. Tapia, who has struggled with drug problems, hasn't fought since October 1990 . . . Promoter **John Yopp** was indicted by a federal grand jury for leading a multimillion-dollar cocaine and heroin ring in Detroit. Yopp has most recently promoted in the Los Angeles area . . . In December, **Otis Nixon**, an outfielder for the Atlanta Braves, married **Juanita Leonard**, the former wife of **Sugar Ray Leonard**. Nixon didn't announce the news until February, "for privacy's sake."

THE PUNCHLINE

WBA-IBF heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe, who believes that when Tony Tucker faces WBC king Lennox Lewis, the ring officials will favor the Don King-promoted challenger: "If Lewis hits him on the chin, they might call it a low blow." ■

The Ring Ratings

For Period Ended
February 18, 1993

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By *The Ring* Editors
Records Compiled By Eric Armit

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1 RIDDICK BOWE
Fort Washington, MD *33-0 (WBA/IB*
2 LENNOX LEWIS
England *22-0 (WBC Champ)*
3 EVANDER HOLYFIELD
Atlanta, GA *28-1*
4 MICHAEL MOORER
Detroit, MI *30-0*
5 TONY TUCKER
Beverly Hills, CA *48-1*
6 GEORGE FOREMAN
Marshall, TX *72-3*
7 RAZOR RUDDOCK
Canada *27-4-1*
8 TOMMY MORRISON
Merriam, KS *34-1*
9 ALEX GARCIA
San Fernando, CA *30-1*
10 TONY TUBBS
Redondo Beach, CA *33-4*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 160 pounds

1 JULIAN JACKSON
Virgin Islands *46-1 (WBC Champ)*
2 REGGIE JOHNSON
Houston, TX *33-2-1 (WBA Champ)*
3 ROY JONES
Pensacola, FL *21-0*
4 SUMBU KALAMBAY
Italy *55-5-1*
5 GERALD McCLELLAN
Detroit, MI *26-2*
6 THOMAS TATE
Houston, TX *27-2*
7 LAMAR PARKS
Greeneville, SC *23-1*
8 BERNARD HOPKINS
Philadelphia, PA *22-1*
9 OTIS GRANT
Canada *18-0*
10 FREDERIC SEILLIER
France *31-4-2*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 154 pounds

1 TERRY NORRIS
Mission Valley, CA *33-3 (WBC Champ)*
2 JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ
Argentina *39-1 (WBA Champ)*
3 GIANFRANCO ROSI
Italy *57-3 (IBF Champ)*
4 VINNY PAZIENZA
Cranston, RI *32-5*
5 JOHN DAVID JACKSON
Seattle, WA *28-0*
6 VERNO PHILLIPS
New York, NY *18-5*
7 GILBERT DELE
France *33-3-1*
8 CARL DANIELS
St. Louis, MO *27-1*
9 AARON DAVIS
Bronx, NY *35-1*
10 LAURENT BOUDOUANI
France *22-1*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 147 pounds

1 BUDDY McGIRT
Hauppauge, NY *58-2-1 (WBC Champ*
2 CRISANTO ESPANA
N. Ireland *28-0 (WBA Champ)*
3 MAURICE BLOCKER
Germantown, MD *34-2 (IBF Champ)*
4 YORI BOY CAMPAS
Mexico *44-0*
5 MANNING GALLOWAY
Columbus, OH *49-11-1*
6 LUDOVIC PROTO
France *27-0*
7 GENARO LEON
Mexico *41-3-2*
8 STEPHAN JOHNSON
Brooklyn, NY *21-4-1*
9 DAVID GONZALEZ
Houston, TX *32-2-1*
10 LARRY BARNES
Mount Vernon, NY *26-1*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 126 pounds

1 PAUL HODKINSON
England *22-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2 MANUEL MEDINA
Mexico *46-3 (IBF Champ)*
3 YUNG KYUN PARK
South Korea *23-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
4 KEVIN KELLEY
Flushing, NY *32-0*
5 JESSE JAMES LEIJA
San Antonio, TX *25-0-1*
6 TOM JOHNSON
Detroit, MI *30-2-1*
7 RUBEN PALACIO
Colombia *45-11-2*
8 LUISITO ESPINOSA
Philippines *30-6*
9 COLIN McMILLAN
England *23-2*
10 GOYO VARGAS
Mexico *28-3-1*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 122 pounds

1 KENNEDY McKINNEY
Las Vegas, NV *22-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2 TRACY PATTERSON
Highland, NY *46-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
3 WELCOME NCITA
South Africa *31-1*
4 WILFREDO VASQUEZ
Puerto Rico *35-6-3 (WBA Champ)*
5 DUKE McKENZIE
England *33-3*
6 JESSE BENAVIDES
Corpus Christi, TX *35-2-1*
7 JESUS SALUD
San Diego, CA *43-5*
8 RUDY ZAVALA
Rosemead, CA *20-1-1*
9 LUIS MENDOZA
Colombia *34-3-2*
10 JULIO GERVACIO
Puerto Rico *24-3-2*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 118 pounds

1 ORLANDO CANIZALES
Laredo, TX *33-1-1 (IBF Champ)*
2 ELIECER JULIO
Colombia *22-0 (WBA Champ)*
3 VICTOR RABANALES
Mexico *33-10-2 (WBC Champ)*
4 JUNIOR JONES
Brooklyn, NY *27-0*
5 JOICHIRO TATSUYOSHI
Japan *8-1-1*
6 EDDIE COOK
Las Vegas, NV *18-2*
7 ISRAEL CONTRERAS
Venezuela *35-3-1*
8 JAVIER LEON
Mexico *38-5-2*
9 RAFAEL DEL VALLE
Puerto Rico *13-0*
10 HAROLD MESTRE
Colombia *15-2*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 195 pounds

1 **BOBBY CZYZ**
Montgomery, NJ *40-5 (WBA Champ)*

2 **ANACLET WAMBA**
France *37-2 (WBC Champ)*

3 **AL COLE**
Newark, NJ *21-1 (IBF Champ)*

4 **ORLIN NORRIS**
Campo, CA *35-3*

5 **JAMES WARRING**
Miami, FL *14-2*

6 **NATE MILLER**
Philadelphia, PA *21-3*

7 **ARTHUR WILLIAMS**
Las Vegas, NV *18-1-1*

8 **AKIM TAFER**
France *15-3*

9 **MARCELO FIGUEROA**
Argentina *30-3*

10 **ROBERT DANIELS**
Miami, FL *21-2-1*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1 **PRINCE CHARLES WILLIAMS**
Mansfield, OH *33-4-2 (IBF Champ)*

2 **VIRGIL HILL**
Bismarck, ND *33-1 (WBA Champ)*

3 **JEFF HARDING**
Australia *23-1 (WBC Champ)*

4 **LEEONZER BARBER**
Detroit, MI *16-1*

5 **FRANK TATE**
Houston, TX *32-3*

6 **HENRY MASKE**
Germany *19-0*

7 **IRAN BARKLEY**
Bronx, NY *30-8*

8 **TIM HILLIE**
Washington, D.C. *15-0*

9 **EGERTON MARCUS**
Canada *10-0*

10 **RANDALL YONKER**
Mobile, AL *28-2*

Virgil Hill

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1 **JAMES TONEY**
Ann Arbor, MI *34-1-2 (IBF Champ)*

2 **MICHAEL NUNN**
Davenport, IA *39-1 (WBA Champ)*

3 **CHRIS EUBANK**
England *34-0*

4 **NIGEL BENN**
England *34-2 (WBC Champ)*

5 **TIM LITTLES**
Flint, MI *21-0*

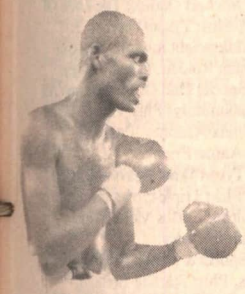
6 **VICTOR CORDOBA**
N. Ireland *18-5-2*

7 **DARRIN VAN HORN**
Lexington, KY *53-3*

8 **TONY THORNTON**
Glassboro, NJ *29-5-1*

9 **FRANK LILES**
N. Hollywood, CA *23-1*

10 **FRANK NICOTRA**
France *30-0*



Maurice Blocker

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 140 pounds

1 **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
Mexico *84-0 (WBC Champ)*

2 **PERNELL WHITAKER**
Norfolk, VA *31-1 (IBF Champ)*

3 **JUAN COGGI**
Argentina *59-2-2 (WBA Champ)*

4 **TERRENCE ALLI**
Linden, NJ *51-7-2*

5 **CHARLES MURRAY**
Newark, NJ *27-1*

6 **RAFAEL PINEDA**
Colombia *28-2*

7 **CARLOS GONZALEZ**
Mexico *35-0*

8 **HECTOR LOPEZ**
Tarzana, CA *25-1*

9 **GREG HAUGEN**
Henderson, NV *32-4-1*

10 **KOSTYA TSZYU**
Australia *7-0*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 135 pounds

1 **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
Mexico *26-0 (WBC Champ)*

2 **FREDDIE PENDLETON**
Miami, FL *33-17-4 (IBF Champ)*

3 **TONY LOPEZ**
Sacramento, CA *42-3-1 (WBA Champ)*

4 **RAFAEL RUELAS**
Arleta, CA *35-1*

5 **TRACY SPANN**
Plainfield, NJ *27-2-1*

6 **JOEY GAMACHE**
Lewiston, ME *28-1*

7 **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
Takoma Park, MD *28-0*

8 **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
France *43-4-2*

9 **LEAVANDER JOHNSON**
Atlantic City, NJ *17-0-1*

10 **MIGUEL JULIO**
Colombia *21-1-1*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 130 pounds

1 **AZUMAH NELSON**
Ghana *35-2-1 (WBC Champ)*

2 **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
Los Angeles, CA *27-0 (WBA Champ)*

3 **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
Puerto Rico *28-3 (IBF Champ)*

4 **JEFF FENECH**
Australia *26-1-1*

5 **BERNARD TAYLOR**
Knoxville, TN *44-2-2*

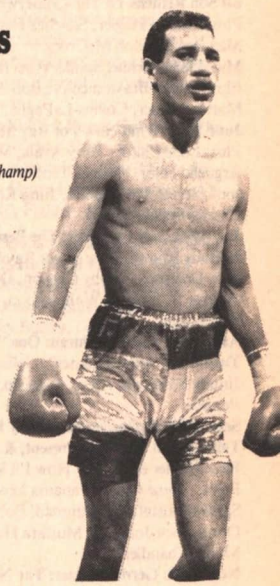
6 **GABE RUELAS**
Arleta, CA *33-1*

7 **CALVIN GROVE**
Philadelphia, PA *41-5*

8 **REGILIO TUUR**
Whitestone, NY *31-2-1*

9 **RENATO CORNETT**
Australia *22-1-1*

10 **VICTOR HUGO PAZ**
Argentina *33-1-1*



John-John Molina

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 115 pounds

1 **SUNG KIL MOON**
South Korea *18-1 (WBC Champ)*

2 **KATSUYA ONIZUKA**
Japan *20-0 (WBA Champ)*

3 **JULIO BORBOA**
Mexico *18-4 (IBF Champ)*

4 **THALERNGSAK SITHBAOBAY**
Thailand *39-3*

5 **ROBERT QUIROGA**
San Antonio, TX *20-1*

6 **JOHNNY BREDAHL**
Denmark *15-0*

7 **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
Mexico *22-0*

8 **VINCENZO BELCASTRO**
Italy *23-5-3*

9 **NANA KONADU**
Ghana *25-2-1*

10 **JOEL LUNA ZARATE**
Mexico *21-0*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 112 pounds

1 **YURI ARBACHAKOV**
Japan *14-0 (WBC Champ)*

2 **PHICHIT SITHBANGPRACHAN**
Thailand *14-0 (IBF Champ)*

3 **DAVID GRIMAN**
Venezuela *15-1 (WBA Champ)*

4 **RODOLFO BLANCO**
Colombia *26-7-1*

5 **DAVE McAULEY**
Ireland *18-3-2*

6 **YONG KANG KIM**
South Korea *25-4*

7 **MUANGCHAI KITTIKASEM**
Thailand *19-2*

8 **ISAIAS ZAMUDIO**
Blythe, CA *32-3-1*

9 **SCOTTY OLSON**
Las Vegas, NV *23-1*

10 **ALBERTO JIMENEZ**
Mexico *22-2-1*

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 108 pounds

1 **MYUNG WOO YUH**
South Korea *37-1 (WBA Champ)*

2 **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
Phoenix, AZ *26-0 (IBF Champ)*

3 **HUMBERTO GONZALEZ**
Mexico *35-1 (WBC Champ)*

4 **HIROKI IOKA**
Japan *22-3-1*

5 **LEON SALAZAR**
Panama *15-3-1*

6 **JOSE DeJESUS**
Puerto Rico *26-2-1*

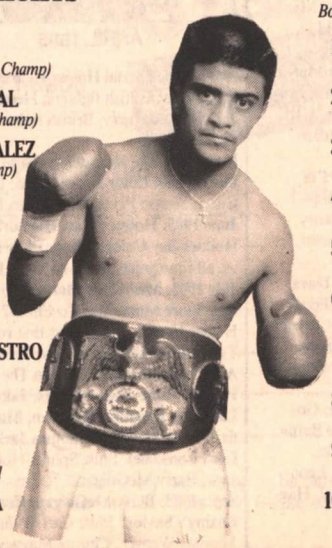
7 **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
Mexico *34-4-3*

8 **SHIRO YAHIRO**
Japan *16-0-1*

9 **DOMINGO SOSA**
Dominican Republic *17-1*

10 **ROBINSON CUESTA**
Panama *23-1*

Michael Carbajal



POUND FOR POUND
Boxing's 10 Best Fighters, Pound For Pound

1 **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
Junior Welterweight

2 **PERNELL WHITAKER**
Junior Welterweight

3 **TERRY NORRIS**
Junior Middleweight

4 **ORLANDO CANIZALES**
Bantamweight

5 **BUDDY McGIRT**
Welterweight

6 **RIDDICK BOWE**
Heavyweight

7 **JAMES TONEY**
Super Middleweight

8 **AZUMAH NELSON**
Junior Lightweight

9 **SUNG KIL MOON**
Junior Bantamweight

10 **JULIAN JACKSON**
Middleweight

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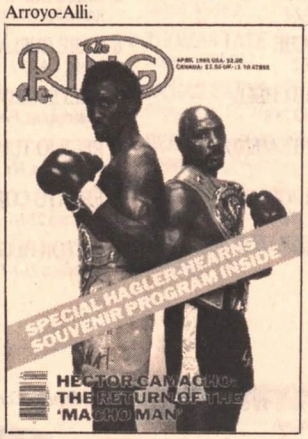
Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.
Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.
March 1984: Fighter Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler. Plus: *The Ring's* annual awards, 1983 fight calender, Carl Williams, Jung-Koo Chang, Chandler-Ruiz (color).
April 1984: Sugar Ray Leonard: "I'm Gonna Be Better Than Ever!" Plus: *Ring's* ratings of 8,000 fighters, Henry Armstrong, Don Lee, Koji Kobayashi, Mancini-Chacon (color).
June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: 'That Championship Year.' Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo, Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.
July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.
Aug. 1984: *Ring* Olympic Special. Plus: Mark Breland, Sugar Ray Leonard, Frank Bruno, Bramble-Mancini (color), Hatcher-Bumphus (color).
Sept. 1984: The Scramble For Bramble: Livingstone's Wrapped Up In Being A Champion. Plus: Hearns-Duran, Rosario-Davis, Aaron Pryor, Eusebio Pedroza.
Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.
Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, James Broad, boxing's best, Julian Jackson, Thomas-Witherspoon.
Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.
Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.
March 1985: Fighter Of The Year: Thomas 'Hit Man' Hearns. Plus: Year-end awards, Darrell-Estrada, Nelson-Gomez, Arroyo-Alli.



APRIL 1985

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, British fighters, Sonny Liston.
May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.
June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.
July 1985: Marvelous Marvin! Are There Any More Mountains To Climb? Plus: Hagler-Hearns, 10 greatest first rounds, Tyson (2-0) rates the heavys, Tubbs-Page.
Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.
Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Carl Williams, Thomas-Weaver, Chavez-Mayweather I.
Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Dwight Muhammad Qawi, Camacho-Ramirez, Berbick-Green, Jeff Fenech, John E. Garcia, McCallum-Braxton.
Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.
Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.
Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.
Feb. 1986: Mike Tyson: The Legacy Of Cus D'Amato. Plus: Rocky IV, Curry-McCrory, Teddy Mann, Kenny Lane.
March 1986: Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Special year-end awards, 1985 boxing diary, annual ratings, Evander Holyfield, Fenech-Coffee.
April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.
May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.
June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.
July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.
Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.
Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.
Oct. 1986: Marvelous Marvin: Can Anyone Fill His Shoes? Plus: Tim Witherspoon, Holyfield-Qawi, Panama's champions, Frankie Duarte, Tyson-Frazier.
Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook Up The Boxing World. Plus: Rosario-Bramble, Honeyghan-Curry, Butch Lewis, Buster Drayton, Johnson-Emebe, Raging Bull II.
April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.
May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.
June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Evander Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.
July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.
Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.
Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.
Oct. 1987: Special Hall Of Fame Issue: Ali Elected Unanimously! Plus: Hall of Fame directory, Spinks-Cooney, Pazienza-Haugen II, Aaron Pryor.
Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple-Crown. Plus: Triple-crown champs, Matthew Hilton, Carlos Monzon interview, McCallum-Curry.
Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.
Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn—Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.
Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.
March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Chavez-Rosario, Roger Mayweather, Rocky Lockridge, bleeders, Bruno-Bugner, Fenech-Zarate, Tony Burton.
April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.
May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.
June 1988: Sugar Ray Robinson Still The Sweetest! Plus: All-time middleweight ratings, Larry Holmes, Louie Lomeli, McGirt-Warren II, Haugen-Pazienza II.
Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.
Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde, Andries-Czyz.
Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.
Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.
Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: George Foreman (color), Mike Tyson, Carlos Monzon, Duran-Leonard III, LaMotta-Dauthuille.

Feb. 1990: Riddick Bowe/Ray Mercer Target . . . Tyson: Plus: The Olympians as pros (color), Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Wepner-Liston, Bobo Olson.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker—*The Ring* Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Chavez-Taylor preview, Leonard-Duran III, Tiger Flowers, Muhammad Ali.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before!" By Evander Holyfield. Plus: Muhammad Ali painting, Ali-Liston II, New York welters, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan.

Aug. 1990: His Greatness Confirmed . . . Is Julio Cesar Chavez The Greatest Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, Sullivan & Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler—Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Thanks For The Memories: Rocky Graziano, 1922-1990. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Mike Tyson, Napoles-Leonard, A Gathering Of Champions (color).

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman: Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Marciano-LaStarza, boxing's best chins, Azumah Nelson, Sullivan-Kilrain (color).

Dec. 1990: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Joe Grim, Douglas-Holyfield preview, Marciano-Frazier, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV: Now You'll Pay. Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison, Humberto Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis, heavyweight *Ring* covers (color).

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ. Plus: Charles Murray, Billy Bird, Khaosai Galaxy, Armstrong-Duran, computer flyweight tournament, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—*The Ring* Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Mike Tyson, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, computer bantamweight tournament.

May 1991: Ali-Frazier I: 20 Years Later, Still The Fight Of The Century. Plus: Hometown heroes, George Costner, Galindez-Saad Muhammad, Tony Canzoneri, computer featherweight tournament, Ali-Frazier pinup.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Holyfield-Foreman preview, Norris-Leonard, Freddie Steele, computer lightweight tournament, Tiger-Hearns, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be . . . But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Fat, Funny, And Forty-Two, But Certainly No Fraud: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight . . . And The World A Thrill. Plus: Harry Greb, Louis-Conn I, making weight, computer welterweight tournament, Dempsey-Marciano, Holyfield-Foreman (color).

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again—How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness: Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech-Azumah Nelson, Overrated and Underrated, Giardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Muhammad Ali (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, Rating the 44 World Champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

March 1992: Turning Heads—Ray Mercer Makes His Statement To The Heavyweights. Plus: Lou Nova, 1980 Olympic team, boxing cards, Rodrigo Valdes, *Ring's* New Year's wish, Joe Louis-Muhammad Ali, Jack Dempsey (color).

April 1992: Is Evander Holyfield Tough Enough To Stay On Top? Plus: Buddy McGirt, George Foreman, Toney-McCallum, referees, Marvin Hart, Al Hostak, Eusebio Pedroza-Salvador Sanchez, Ketchel-Johnson (color).

May 1992: Fighter Of The Year: James Toney. Plus: Roy Jones, Rocky Graziano, longest title reigns, Myung Woo Huh & Khaosai Galaxy, James Warring, Billy Soose, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: After Mike Tyson's Conviction: What Now? Plus: Buck Smith, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder & Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Foreman-Liston, Tyson (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Larry Holmes On The Big Fight: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Carnival of Champions, Oscar De La Hoya, Haugen-Mancini, Foreman-Stewart, Harry Greb, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Julio Cesar Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Fight The Legends? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez & Nicky Acevedo, alternate careers, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Who'll Stop The Reign? Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Mike Tyson, Tommy Morrison, Chavez-Camacho preview, All-Time Top 10: Australia, Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown, Corbett-Sullivan (color).

Dec. 1992: Foreman vs. Morrison: Should This Fight Happen . . . Will You Watch It? Plus: Ruddock-Lewis preview, Julian Jackson, Al Cole, Jack Johnson, Jack Dempsey Museum, Randolph Turpin, Olympic recap, Floyd Patterson (color).

Jan. 1993: Slammin' n' Jammin'—Bowe & Holyfield Go One On One. Plus: The State Of The Game, Gene Fullmer, Chavez-Camacho, Sullivan & Fitzsimmons, Bigfoot Martin, Carmen Basilio (color).

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, Argentina's All-Time Top 10, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough Now? Plus: *The Ring* poll, Freddie Pendleton, Carbajal-Gonzales preview, Benny Leonard, Charley Burley, Lennox Lewis (color).

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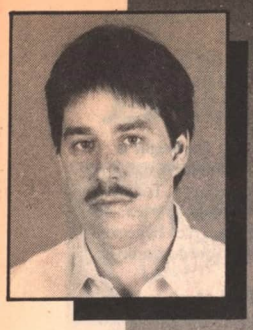


Ryan Out Loud

By Jeff Ryan

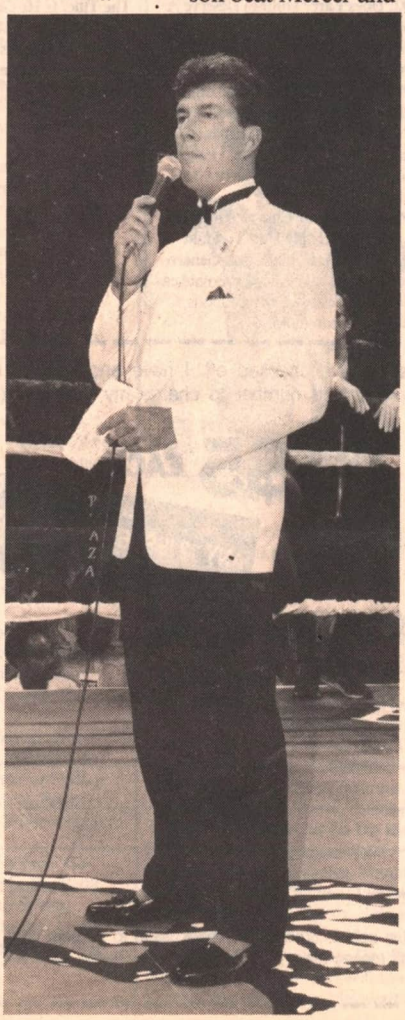
WARNING: MAY CAUSE IRRITATION

Who are the 10 most annoying people in boxing? It's time for a new list. Because Don King, Dan Duva, Bob Arum, and Jose Sulaiman have already received their annoying persons lifetime achievement awards, they have been left off the list this time around. Good. I was getting annoyed just by writing about them.

So here, in no particular order, are the nuisances, pests, flies in the Avatene, or whatever you want to call them.

1) Rock Newman: Where do we start? Let's zone in on a personal favorite: Newman blasts Evander Holyfield for fighting nobodies, then lines up HBO defenses for Riddick Bowe against Michael Dokes, Ray Mercer, and Alex Stewart. (Worse yet, The Rock mentions Frank Bruno as another potential challenger.) Thankfully, Jesse Ferguson beat Mercer and Wimpy Halstead made Stewart look bad, thus effectively eliminating them from contention. Can we assume that Ferguson and Halstead were angry HBO subscribers unhappy with the future programming schedule?

Ring announcer Michael Buffer



2) Michael Buffer: Let's get ready to grumble. Captain Coppertone didn't become annoying until the day a few years ago when he stopped dramatically announcing the introductions and started *singing* them. At the same time, Buff seemed to go Hollywood on us. Today, he looks like he's wearing more pancake makeup than Aunt Jemima, and his hair wouldn't move if a tornado touched down on the top of his head.

Give me Jimmy Lennon Jr. or give me death.

3) Mills Lane: This guy has become a little too full of himself, and his routines are getting boring. With that marble-mouthed delivery of the tiresome "let's get it on," Lane sounds like an old reject from a Bowery Boys audition. And if I want to watch somebody twitch their nose every time they appear on TV, I'll tune in to reruns of *Bewitched.*

Before the opening bell of a bout with Carl Williams in January, a bored Tommy Morrison split in the middle of Lane's shtick and headed back to his corner. The third ego in the ring ordered Morrison back to ring-center so as not to disrupt the delivery of his trademark line.

Mills, you're being penalized a point for excessive holding—of yourself in such unduly high regard.

4) Radio talkshow hosts: These phonies deserve all the static we can give them. Much of this on-air "talent" doesn't know its unintentional butt from its elbow, but nonetheless chooses to pontificate on boxing whenever a big fight is taking place. These general sports experts couldn't name a junior lightweight if you held their families hostage. Any listener with an iota of boxing knowledge usually sniffs out the impostors within 30 seconds and switches to another station.

5) Terry Norris: "Terrible" Terry isn't half as terrible as his competition. The biggest threat to the elderly is rumored cuts in

Social Security benefits, but the second biggest threat is the WBC super welterweight king. If he's on top of the mountain, why does he only look over the hill for his challengers?

Whenever Norris does face someone his age, it's a welterweight moving up. If he wants us to believe that his knockout loss to Julian Jackson four years ago was a fluke, he should move up to 160 pounds and challenge Jackson again. Norris promised a long time ago that he could beat any 160-pounder in the world, and this middle-wait is testing our patience.

6) Bill Cayton: Saying Cayton is pompous is like saying Hank Aaron was a powerhitter. The manager of Tommy Morrison, and ex-manager of Mike Tyson, could find a way to look down his nose at the Statue of Liberty. When he's not saying things like "I have established a reputation for integrity that is unrivaled in any business," Cayton is telling you how Morrison is the best heavyweight in the world, and a certainty to beat Riddick Bowe and become a huge success. Though not as huge a success, Cayton will quickly remind you, as he himself has been.

7) Buster Douglas: No, we *haven't* heard a burp out of him in over two years, but that's the point. Scale-Buster followed the greatest upset in sports history with that disgraceful Orca impersonation against Evander Holyfield. But Douglas did cash a check for $24.1-million that night, and that started the predictable domino effect—or, more accurately, Domino's pizza effect—toward career stagnation.

Take the money and lounge. Now *that's* career-planning. Douglas is now rumored to be the largest thing in Columbus, Ohio, that doesn't require a zoning permit. Of course, there are always reports that he is training for a comeback. We'll know he's serious when he puts on his training bra.

8) Larry Holmes: Even when he loses we can't get rid of him. I'd like to say that I hope Bowe finally puts him out of our misery, but that would mean that Holmes would have faked his way into another multi-million-dollar title shot. Larry is fortysomething and fighting, so he thinks he's George Foreman. Charlie Hough is fortysomething and pitching. Is he Nolan Ryan?

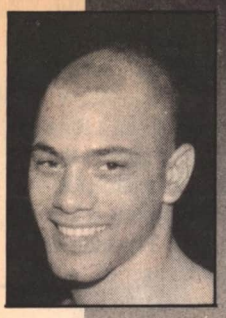
Former heavyweight champion Larry Holmes

9) Alex Sherer: Two years ago, Alexander The Grate was on our phone lines as often as a dial tone when he was telling us how stupid we were for saying Thomas Hearns was on the decline. After the trainer guided Hearns to an upset of Virgil Hill, he was calling in an "I told you so" practically before the ring lights had cooled. (Never mind that most of the staff had picked Hearns to win.) But since Hearns' one-sided loss to Iran Barkley last year, Sherer has been MIA: Missing In Arrogance.

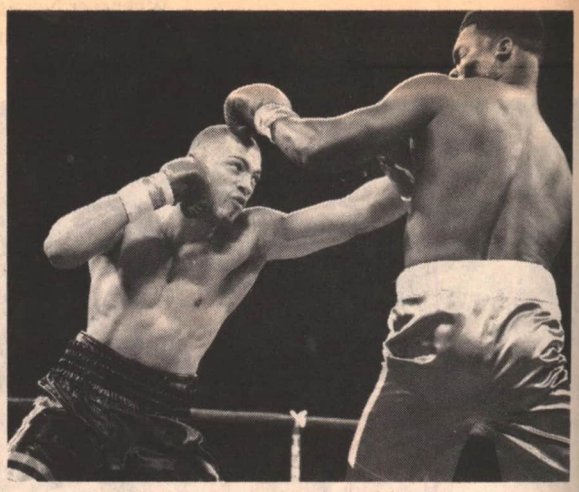
He never did ring *The Ring* to explain what went wrong. Maybe this is his idea of call-waiting.

10) Mike Tyson: He spends his days sweeping floors and stacking weights in a prison gymnasium, has nothing to do with boxing anymore, and, yet, *still* finds a way to get on my nerves. In February, the NBC documentary, *Fallen Champ: The Untold Story Of Mike Tyson*, aired excerpts of a 1992 prison interview in which Misunderstood Mikey explained that people would have a different impression of him if they just got to know him.

Got to know him? This is a guy who did a better job of avoiding the press than Bobby Hurley. Joe Louis was more accessible after he died. Tyson wants us to sing, "To know, know, know him is to love, love, love him . . ." Meanwhile, he serenades us with *Jailhouse Crock*. ■



New Faces



Williams attacks vs. Willie Johnson

Jeremy Williams

Heavyweight

By Ed Maloney

Jeremy Williams, 6'2" and 205 pounds, is an impressive physical specimen, with an equally impressive boxing resume. He's won two world amateur championships, two National Golden Glove crowns, and two U.S. amateur titles, as well as a host of junior honors. So one might wonder why only a few people know about this phenom. The answer: Last summer, he suffered two devastating decision losses to Montell Griffin at the 1992 Olympic Box-offs. Had Williams repeated his Olympic Trials victory over Griffin in either of those bouts, he would have secured a berth on the team that went to Barcelona.

Michael Nunn, Mike Tyson, and countless other successful amateurs have learned that if you don't make the Olympic team and win a gold medal, your pro debut will likely go unnoticed. Making it big in boxing means you have to appeal to the average sports fan, not just fight fans. Even though the Olympic competition can be veiwed as just one more major world championship, without the gold you ride coach, not first-class.

So last fall, Williams, a native of Long Beach, California, and his father, Charles, who had trained Jeremy since he began boxing at age seven, fielded offers from several big-time managers and promoters. They decided to come east and be guided by manager Bill Cayton and trainer Kevin Rooney.

"My dad saw the politics that went on in the amateurs," says the 20-year-old Williams. "On a scale of one to 10, it's a four compared to the pros. My father wanted me to be managed by somebody who had a good reputation, and who would get me a trainer to take me to the championship level. Father-son relationships have never worked in boxing. My dad was smart enough to know that."

Since then, the "light" has been removed, and Williams is a full-grown, not full-blown, heavyweight. He used to walk around in the high-180s and starve himself to make the amateur light heavyweight limit of 178.

"I spent a lot of time in saunas and training in plastic suits," he says. "I never knew what it was like to train when I wasn't wearing three or four sweatshirts. But those days are gone."

Now he eats three meals a day and works out religiously. Since last August, the fighter has grown almost an inch and put on 20 "solid" pounds.

"Like Michael Moorer, Jeremy was fighting at an artificially low weight," says co-manager Steve Lott. "But unlike Moorer [who went from 175 to as high as 225 in 17 months], Jeremy is ripped."

"Jeremy is the most dedicated fighter that I've ever seen," says Cayton. "After he beat Hassan Shabbaz in Ledyard, Connecticut, he made the three-hour drive back to Catskill the next morning to train."

(Continued on page 63)

PRO RECORD

1992

Oct. 14	Jerry Arentzen, Atlantic City	KO 2
Nov. 3	Hassan Shabbaz, Ledyard, CT	KO 1
Nov. 18	David Payne, Troy, NY	KO 1
Dec. 5	Willie Johnson, Atlantic City	KO 1
Dec. 23	Sinclair Babb, White Plains, NY	KO 2

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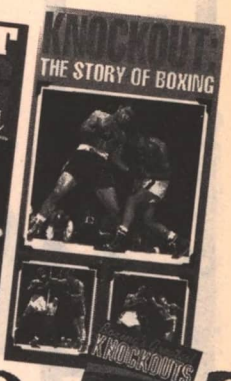

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RING'S

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Can you identify the fighters in these photos? Award yourself 10 points for each question you answer correctly. If you score a total of 90-100 points, consider yourself a world champion. If you score 70-80 points, you rate as a top-10 contender. If you score 50-60 points, you're a clubfighter at best. Less than 50 points? Eat another piece of cheesecake and forget about that morning roadwork.

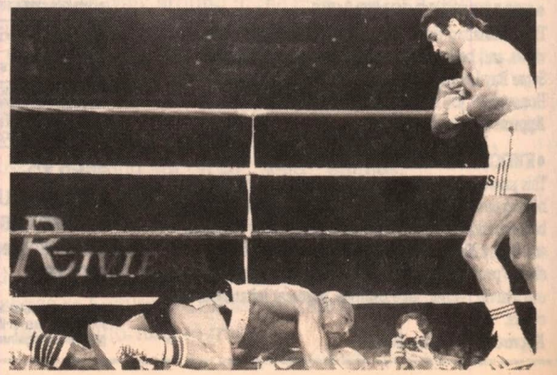
1 After losing to Larry Holmes, heavily hyped heavyweight Gerry Cooney remained inactive for 15 months. When he finally returned in September 1984, he stopped this journeyman in four rounds.

2

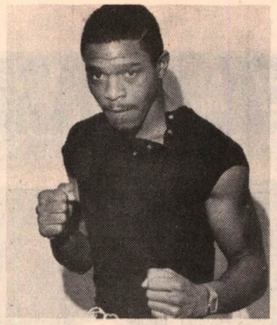
The ring lineup is a wonderful big-fight tradition. We'll spot you Muhammad Ali. From left to right, name the other four world champions. Hint: The photo was taken at Hagler-Hearns in April 1985.

3

Argentine strongman Juan Roldan stands over world middleweight champion Marvin Hagler during their March 1984 title fight. "Marvelous Marvin's" chin was legendary. Did this count as an official knockdown?

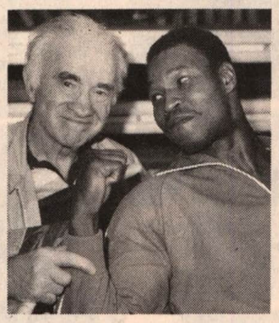


4 This photo was taken almost 10 years ago, when the fighter was a world-rated lightweight. Now he's a 31-year-old junior welterweight who is nearing his first shot at a world title.



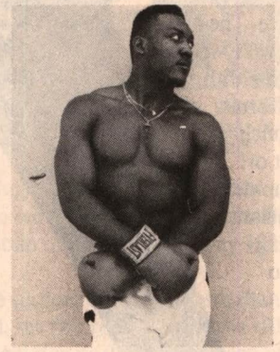
5 Lights, action, camera! On the left is a real Marine Corps officer. On the right is a world champion preparing for his role in 1959's *All The Young Men*. No, he didn't win an Oscar.

6 Don't worry, Larry Holmes would never have actually smacked this legendary trainer and cutman who worked with, among others, Holmes, Roberto Duran, Rocky Marciano, Dick Tiger, and Vito Antuofermo.

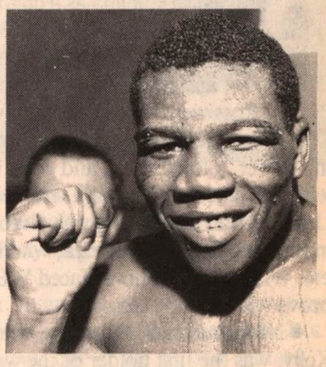


7 Okay, so her aim ain't perfect. Her daddy's aim was pretty good, though, especially with his left hook. He was a two-division world champion in the '70s.

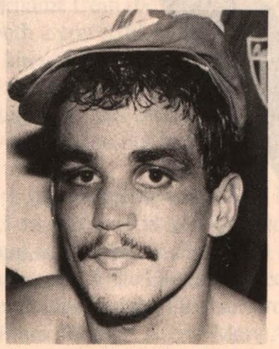
8 A fighter must always be ready for action, even if he's just holding up a wall in his neighborhood. This heavyweight, a fringe contender from New Jersey, is a regular on ESPN.



9 This world champion reigned in the '60s, during a time when Cuban fighters regularly emigrated to the United States.



10 From our How Quickly They Forget Dept.: This Puerto Rican was a world champion less than three years ago. He remains active, but is no longer considered a title threat. Hint: He ruled one of the eight original weight classes.



ANSWERS:

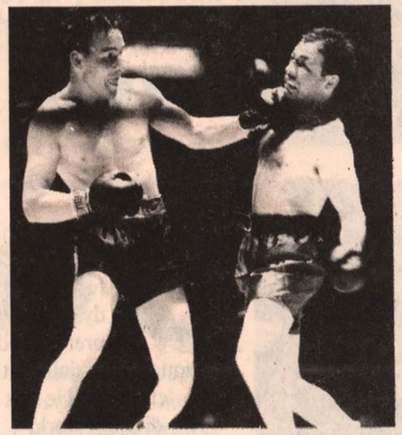
1) Phil Brown;
2) Larry Holmes, Ray Mancini, Milton McCrory, and Jimmy Paul;
3) Yes; 4) Frankie Randall;
5) Ingemar Johansson;
6) Freddie Brown; 7) Ruben Olivares;
8) Bruce Seldon; 9) Benny "Kid" Paret;
10) Juan Nazario

The Best Of A Nation

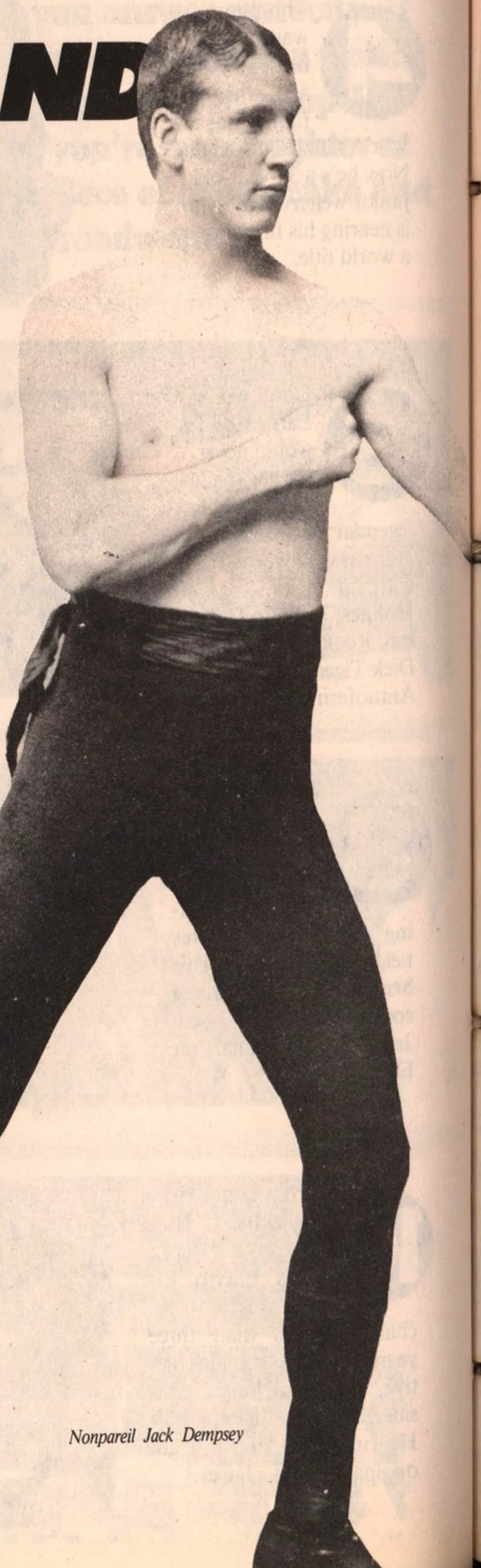
THIS MONTH: IRELAND

1. Jimmy McLarnin
2. Barry McGuigan
3. Nonpareil Jack Dempsey
4. Jack McAuliffe
5. Mike McTigue
6. Dave McAuley
7. Rinty Monaghan
8. Tom Sharkey
9. George Gardner
10. Jim Coffey

By Patrick Myler



Jimmy McLarnin trades with Tony Canzoneri in a battle of future hall of famers. In an unforgettable career, McLarnin fought 14 different world champions.



Nonpareil Jack Dempsey

Jimmy McLarnin was a gifted boxer who carried a payoff punch in both hands. Born in Hillsborough, County Down, he emigrated to Canada as a child and did his fighting in the USA. At first glance, his record of 63-11-3 (20) is not overly impressive. The key to his greatness was the quality of his opponents; no fewer than 16 were world champions, and he beat 14 of them. His three welterweight title fights with Barney Ross were ring classics. Now in his mid-80s, he lives in California.

● **Barry McGuigan** augmented sustained aggression with real punching power, a long reach, and good lateral movement, and topped it off with 100 percent dedication. His reign as WBA featherweight titleholder (June 1985 to June 1986) was disappointingly short, but he was brilliant in toppling Eusebio Pedroza, who had thwarted 19 previous challengers. What a pity he never faced WBC champion Azumah Nelson to prove who was top gun.

● **Nonpareil Jack Dempsey**, whose real name was John Kelly, was the first holder of the world middleweight title. He was noted for the accuracy and clever timing of his blows. His courage was proved when he refused to quit against Bob Fitzsimmons. Even Fitz took pity on him before applying the finisher. Dempsey, who inspired heavyweight William Harrison Dempsey to adopt his name, lost only three times in 64 contests.

● **Jack McAuliffe** did better than his pal Dempsey. He fought 36 times and never lost. Mind you, he was on the lucky end of a few dubious decisions, especially in his 74-round draw with Englishman Jem Carney for the undisputed lightweight title. McAuliffe's supporters stormed the ring when he looked a beaten man. Rarely in top condition, Jack was a naturally gifted boxer with the durability to survive long battles.

Who was the best British fighter of all-time? The best Mexican? The best Japanese? The debate will rage forever. In an attempt to fuel the fire, or at least offer some perspective, *The Ring* has asked several of its correspondents to compile their personal top-10 lists.

Flyweight champion Dave McAuley slugs it out with Rodolfo Blanco (above left). The Irishman rose from four knockdowns to win on points. Featherweight Barry McGuigan kayos Farrid Gallouze (above right) to retain the European title.

● **Mike McTigue** was as exciting as watching a caterpillar munching a cabbage. His ultra-cautious style didn't endear him to anyone but his wife, who liked to see him come home unscathed. Nevertheless, his speed and pinpoint jab enabled him to outsmart bizarre Battling Siki in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day 1923, and capture the world light heavyweight crown. How could he have lost?

● **Dave McAuley** claims more successful title defenses than any other Irish-born champion. In an age when world crowns are as plentiful as flies in a farmyard, his five retentions of the IBF flyweight belt doesn't quite have the merit of bygone times. But the Irishman never let cuts or knockdowns (there have been plenty of each) get him down. He was one of the gutsiest champions of recent vintage.

● **Rinty Monaghan** got his nickname from the '30s movie wonder dog Rin Tin Tin. The little Belfastman fought like a bulldog, aiming to end proceedings with a powerful right hand. Usually he succeeded. Trouble was, he often spoiled things by turning in some stinkers. He was still king of the world's flyweights when a chest injury forced him to quit in 1950.

● **Tom Sharkey** misses out on the list of Irish-born world kings. But he was one of the roughest, toughest, gamest fighters of them all. Only 5'11" and 180 pounds, he took on the biggest and best around the turn of the century. World champion James J. Jeffries, 35 pounds heavier, twice failed to put him away, first in a 20-rounder, then in a bitter 1899 title battle lasting 25 rounds.

● **George Gardner's** black mark was losing the world light heavyweight crown to a 41-year-old over-the-hill Bob Fitzsimmons. But he did topple top-notchers such as Kid McCoy, Jack Root, and Peter Maher, and, in 1902, survived 20 rounds with Jack Johnson. At his best, Gardner was a clever stylist with a fairly decent punch.

● **Jim Coffey** was one of the numerous White Hopes paraded as a potential conqueror of despised black heavyweight champion Jack Johnson. Knockout wins over Soldier Kearns, Fireman Jim Flynn, Jack "Twin" Sullivan, and Arthur Pelkey catapulted him into the front ranks. But in 1915, Frank Moran's sweet "Mary Ann" right hand caressed him to sleep in the third round.

Patrick Myler, who is based in Dublin, has written a book on Irish boxing history. He is a frequent contributor to The Ring. ■

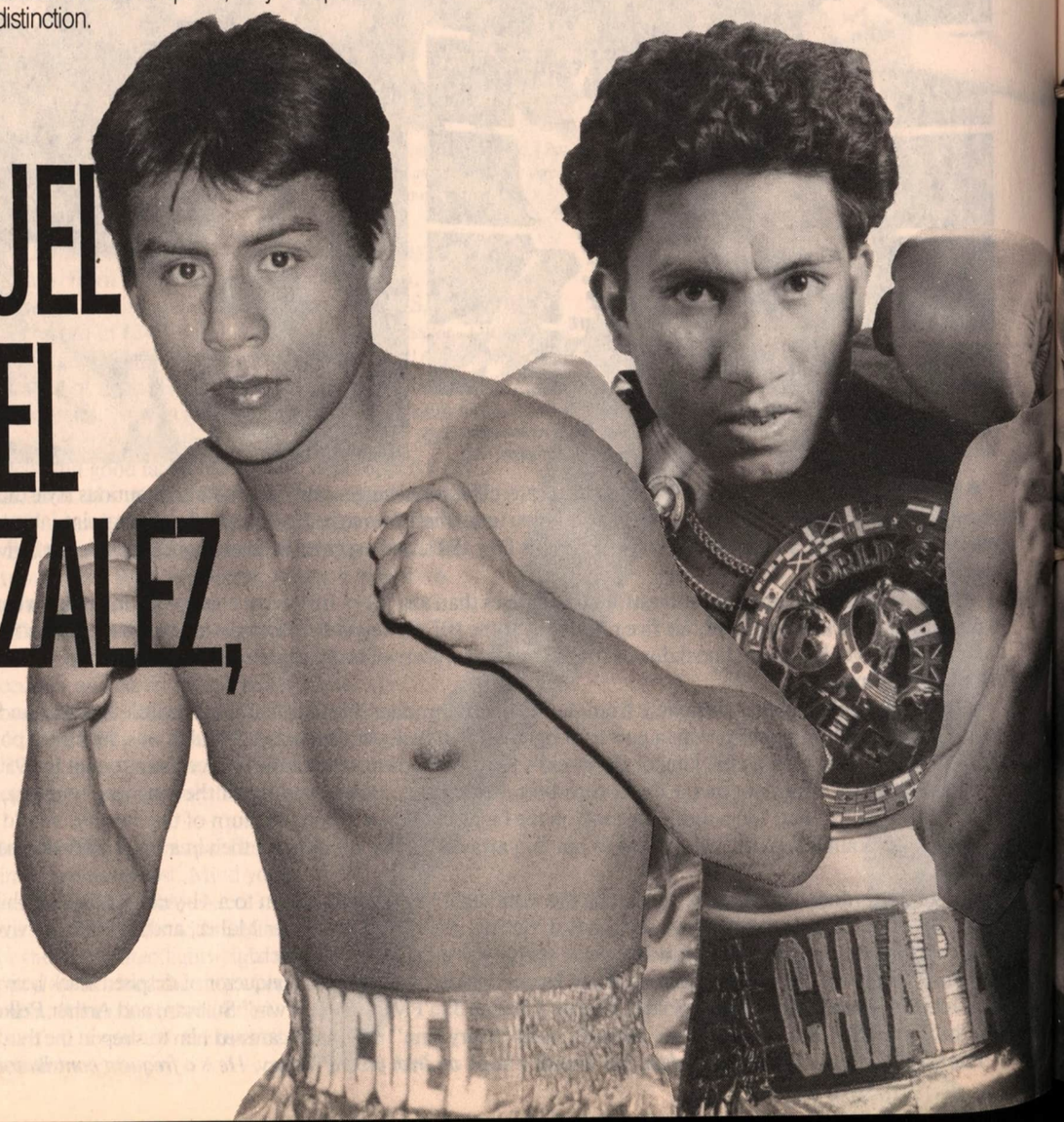
In Mexico, There's More Than Just J.C. Superstar

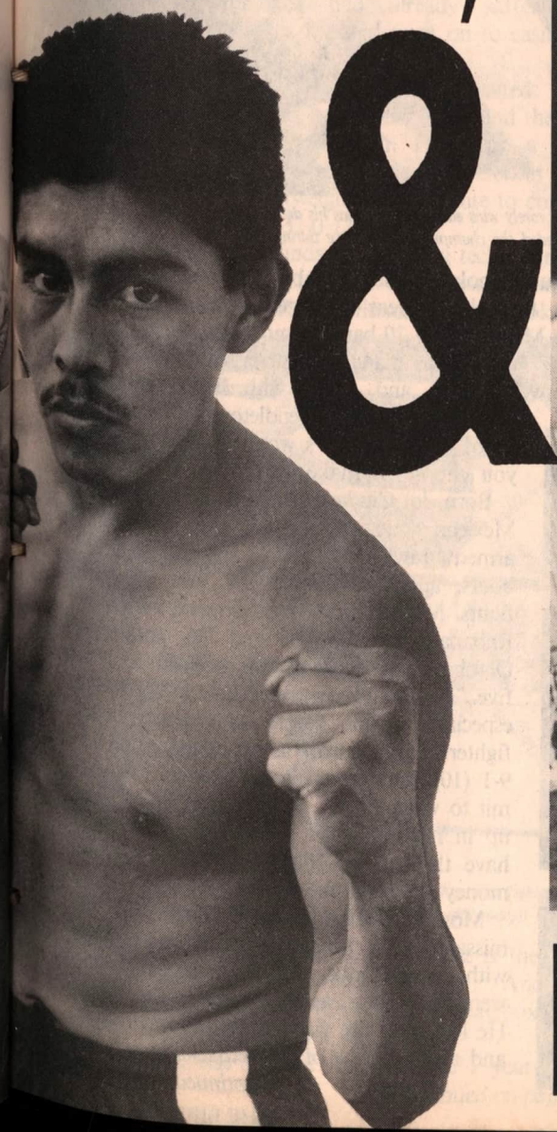
meet MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ, VICTOR RABANALES, JULIO BORBOA, & RICARDO LOPEZ

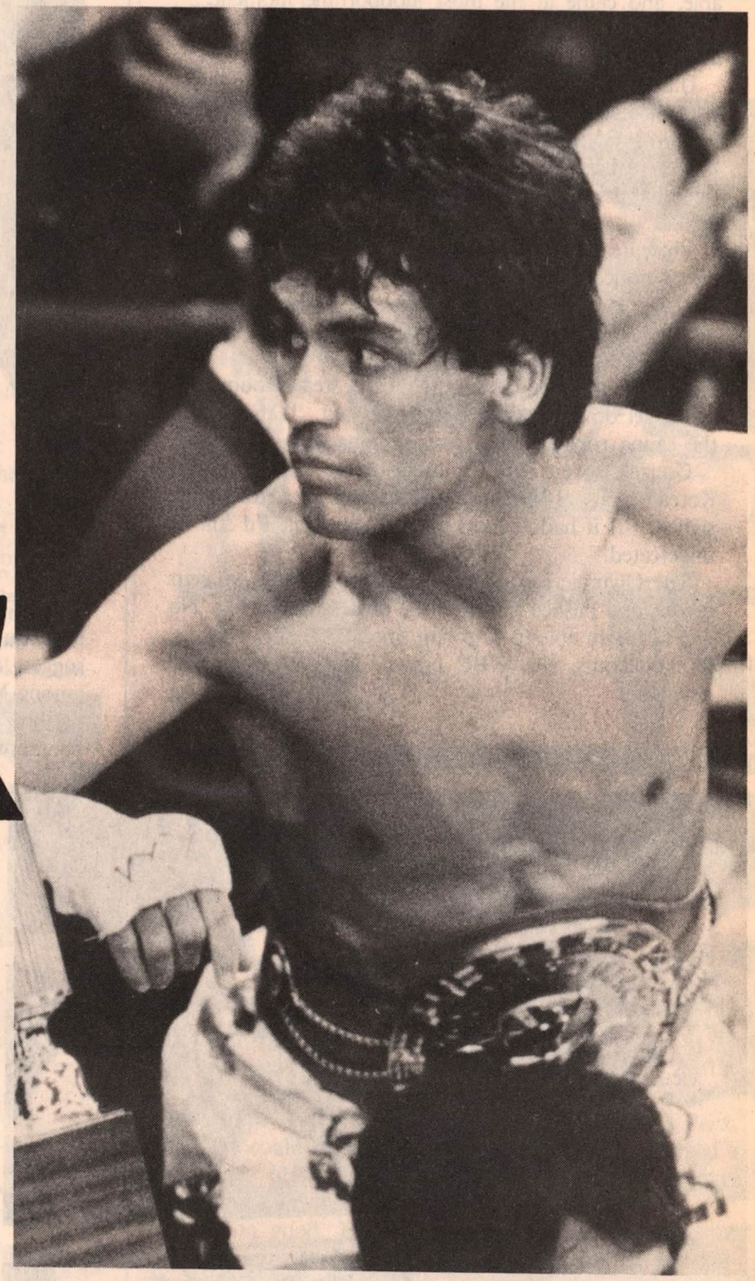
By Bruce Williams & Steve Farhood

Two of them are naturals, prodigies whose combined amateur and professional records are 161-1. The other two shed their clubfighter tags to become the most unlikely of world champions. But all four are underpublicized, probably because boxing can handle only one Mexican star at a time, and as long as Julio Cesar Chavez continues his climb toward 100 wins . . .

Meet Miguel Angel Gonzalez, Victor Rabanales, Ricardo Lopez, and Julio Borboa. Maybe you haven't seen them on television. Maybe you haven't even heard of them. But in an era of more than 50 world champions, they're representing Mexico with distinction.







MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ

WBC Lightweight Champion

Miguel Angel Gonzalez always arrives early at the arena. That's a sign of a well-prepared and intelligent professional. But Gonzalez has another reason for being careful: Not knowing when he was going to be fighting cost him his only defeat in 90 fights as an amateur and pro.

"It was something painful for me," recalled the WBC lightweight champion, "because it was so avoidable, and came at the most inopportune moment."

It was an Olympic moment not to write home about.

U.S. light heavyweight Anthony Hembrick received a lot of attention for missing his bus ride to his fight at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, but he wasn't the only fighter to have scheduling problems. Almost the same thing happened to Mexico's contender for a lightweight medal.

Vincente Torres, manager of the Mexican squad, didn't notice that Gonzalez' bout was on the schedule until the day of his fight. Gonzalez had eaten a big meal the night before, and was resting when he was told he'd have to fight that day.

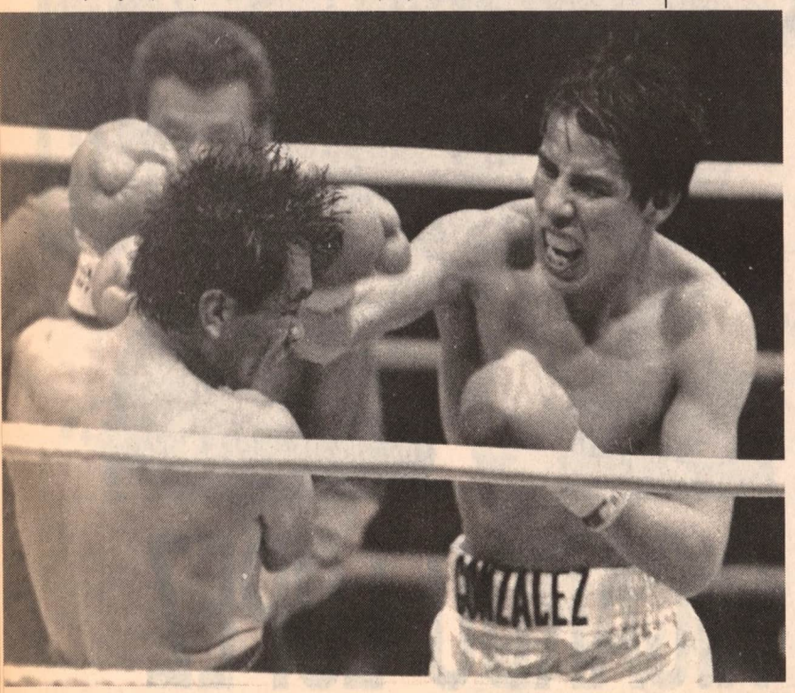
"The only recourse was to hit the steam room so I could get down to the weight," he said. "I did it, but the sauna robbed me of my stamina and strength."

Gonzalez went on to lose a close decision to a Korean rival. "I thought I had earned the verdict," he sighed. "If it hadn't been for the oversight, I'd still be undefeated."

The Olympic loss ended Gonzalez' 63-fight amateur career, and pushed him into the professional ranks. No one has been able to stop him since: 27 fights, 27 wins, 24 knockouts, the WBC crown, and one successful defense.

(Continued on page 54)

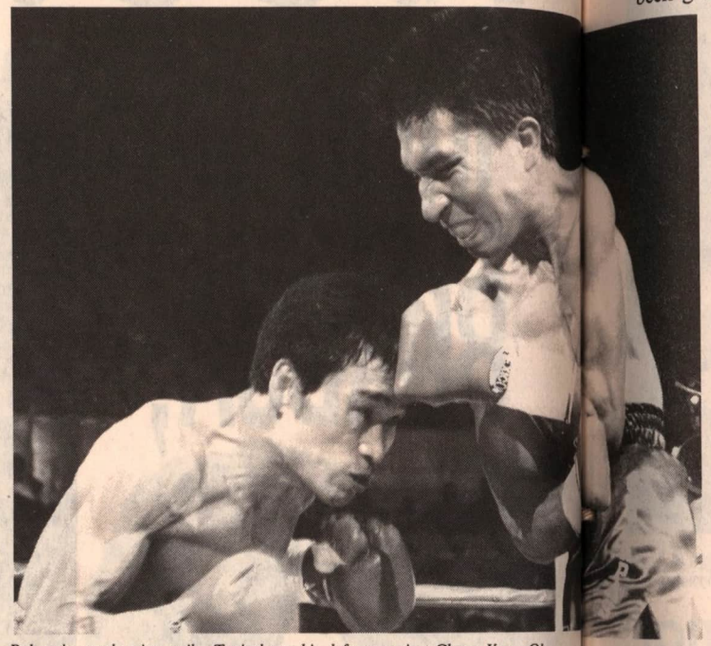
Gonzalez, a big puncher, believes he's the world's best lightweight. Champs Tony Lopez (WBA) and Freddie Pendleton (IBF) make the same claim.



VICTOR RABANALES

WBC Bantamweight Champion

During the '70s, Mexico's best bantamweights left room in the world ratings for no one else. The division was so deep that fighters like Ruben Olivares, Chucho Castillo, Carlos Zarate, and Alfonso Zamora won world titles *before* gaining recognition as the best 118-pounders in their homeland.



Rabanales rarely wins easily. Typical was his defense against Chang Kyun Oh, who extended the champion the distance during their battle last July.

A quick look at Victor Rabanales' record would suggest that the 30-year-old veteran might not rate among Mexico's top *20* banties, much less its best two or three. Yet he has made four defenses of the WBC bantamweight title, and, along with IBF lightweight champion Freddie Pendleton, is punching proof that a fighter's won-lost mark is what you choose to make of it.

Born in Ciudad Hidalgo in the central Mexican state of Chiapas, the 5'4" short-armed brawler engaged in only 22 amateur bouts, and lost three of his first four pro fights. Momentum seemed beyond his grasp. Rabanales lost in 1985 and '86, and from October 1987 to May '88 dropped four of five. Two of his five brothers, Porfirio and especially Bruno, were considered better fighters. His record was an unappetizing 15-9-1 (10), prompting *Boxing News'* Eric Armit to write, " . . . if Rabanales had turned up in my net when I was fishing, I would have thrown him back and asked for my money back on the net."

Most of Rabanales' early losses were dismissable, but boxing records don't come with explanations. His first three defeats were due to cuts, as were some of the others. He lost twice by disqualification for butting, and avenged two of his setbacks in his very

(Continued on page 55)

RICARDO LOPEZ

WBC Strawweight Champion

None of Ricardo Lopez' days will ever be as difficult as April 25, 1989. That's the night his mother died.

Lopez was training to fight Javier "Olympico" Juarez in Mexico City's Arena Coliseo. His mother had been gravely ill after a heart attack, but her death still came as a shock.

"The death of one's mother is the worst thing that can happen to a person," he said.

Lopez' manager, the legendary Cuyo Hernandez, and the fighter's father, Magdaleno Lopez, both asked that Ricardo postpone his fight.

"But I wanted to demonstrate that I am a professional," Lopez explained. "For that fight I had a lot of confidence in my fists, in my ability, and I was very inspired by her memory. My mother always taught me that in everything you dedicate yourself to, always give it your best."

Nothing Juarez landed could match the pain Lopez had already suffered. He dropped his foe and went on to easily score his 19th win.

"I was born to box," he stated.

Lopez has movie star looks and the verbal skills of a politician. He's also a natural fighter, and has made six defenses of the WBC strawweight title en route to compiling a perfect record of 32-0 (23).

Battling at 105 pounds, he is a ring technician *and* a hard puncher, the best fighter that most of the world has never heard of. Rafael Mendoza, who books Latin

Lopez is a rarity: a technician who can punch as well as any fighter at his weight. He's made six defenses, and is rated the best strawweight ever.

fighters all over the world, says, "Lopez is the finest fighter today pound for pound, bar none." And Julio Cesar Chavez exclaims, "Ricardo is a great boxer; it's a good thing that he's not my weight!"

Lopez, 25, has reigned for almost 2½ years. If a

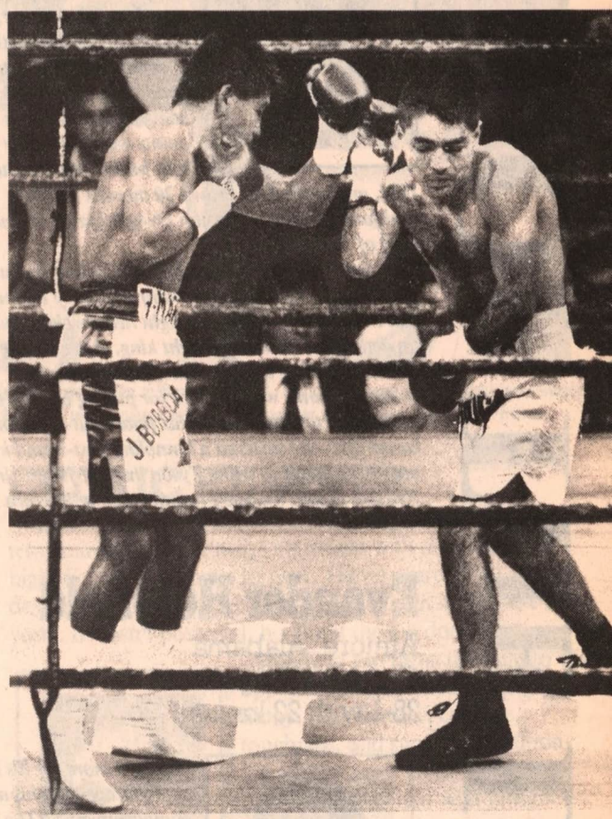
(Continued on page 55)

JULIO BORBOA

IBF Junior Bantamweight Champion

It was bad enough that Julio Borboa, a late-blooming junior bantie from Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico, paraded into San Antonio and chopped up local hero and defending IBF 115-pound champion Robert Quiroga. But after scoring a 12th-round TKO, he added the ultimate insult by announcing to the press, "There are better fighters in Sonora than Quiroga."

If Sonora's talent pool is indeed that rich, Borboa may have blown his home state's cover. Six months ago, almost no one had heard of the 23-year-old boxer-puncher. Today he's a world champion.



Borboa won the title by punishing Robert Quiroga with pinpoint jabs and hooks. The Mexican had lost three of his six previous fights.

In November 1992, Philadelphia-based promoter Russell Peltz needed an opponent for streaking flyweight contender Al Kotey. A couple of phone calls produced the name of Borboa, who trains at the Brooklyn Gym in Los Angeles.

"They said he had a record of 15-4," recalled Peltz. "We could find only seven wins. He'd been stopped a couple of times, but they told me he'd give a good fight."

Too good. For 10 rounds Borboa, who took the fight on two weeks notice, outpunched the puncher, shattering Kotey's dream of a world title fight. Borboa was happy to take his place, and on January 16 he was paid $10,000 to challenge Quiroga, who was making his sixth defense.

"Nobody expected us to come into Quiroga's home turf and beat him, and beat him the way we did," said

(Continued on page 56)

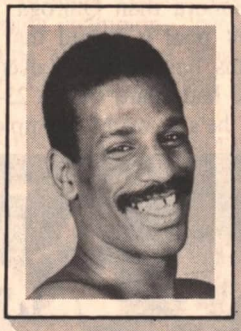
BATTLE OF THE LEGENDS

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Fight fans will forever debate the merits of champions who never met in the ring. In "Battle Of The Legends," the editors of THE RING play matchmaker and pit two of the all-time greats against each other. Three experts serve as judges. If there are particular dream matches that you'd like to see featured, please write to us.

Michael Spinks

St. Louis, Missouri
Career: 1977-1988
31-1 with 21 kayos

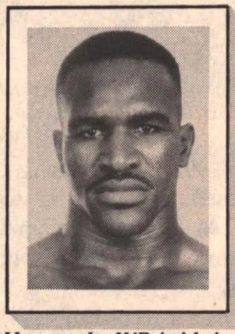


Among the most accomplished fighters of his era, Spinks won a gold medal at the 1976 Olympics and then enjoyed a sterling professional career. A clever, albeit awkward, boxer with a bonecrushing right hand, Spinks won the WBA light heavyweight title with a points win over Eddie Mustafa Muhammad in July 1981, and unified the crown 20 months later by decisioning WBC champion Dwight Qawi. He made a total of 10 defenses.

In September 1985, Spinks made history by outpointing IBF heavyweight champion Larry Holmes. It was the first time a reigning light heavyweight champion dethroned the heavyweight king. After two defenses, including a hotly contested rematch vs. Holmes, Spinks was stripped for pulling out of HBO's unification tournament. In his final bout—and only career loss—he suffered a humbling first-round knockout at the hands of Mike Tyson in June 1988. Almost five years later, there are rumors that he'll return to the ring.

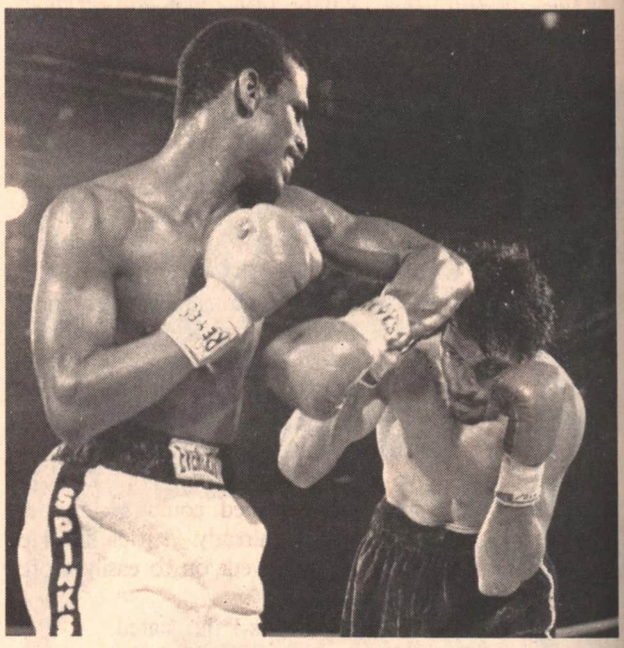
Evander Holyfield

Atmore, Alabama
Career: 1984-present
28-1 with 22 kayos



Noted more for his heart and courage than his accomplishments, "The Real Deal" nonetheless reigned as a unified world champion in two divisions and made about $80-million in the ring. A bronze medal winner at the 1984 Olympics, Holyfield turned pro at light heavyweight and quickly jumped to cruiser. He won the WBA title in July 1986 by outlasting Dwight Qawi in a thriller, then added the IBF and WBC crowns by defeating Rickey Parkey and Carlos DeLeon, respectively. He is regarded as the finest cruiserweight in the division's 13-year history.

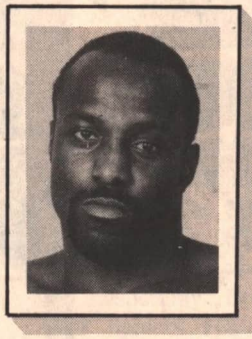
The finely chiseled warrior rose to heavyweight in 1988, and, in October 1990, won the title by kayoing Buster Douglas with one punch. He successfully defended against George Foreman, Bert Cooper, and Larry Holmes before being floored and dethroned on points by Riddick Bowe in 1992's Fight of the Year. As we went to press, he was outlining his plan to regain the title.



As Jim MacDonald discovered, Spinks was as dangerous with his elbows as his fists. A big puncher at 175 pounds, he relied on his quickness as a heavyweight.

DWIGHT QAWI

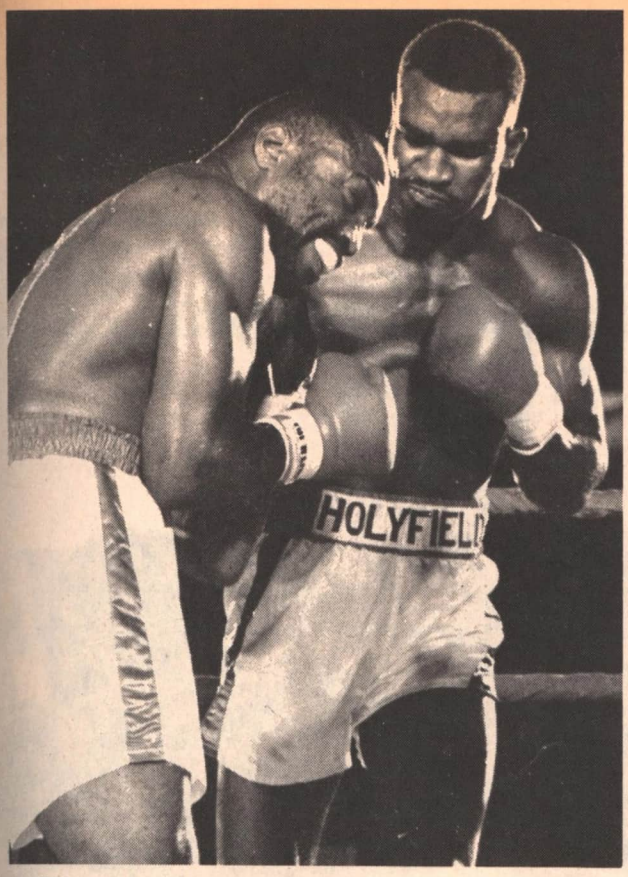
This would be an exciting fight. I should know. I fought both men at their best. Holyfield was excellent as a cruiserweight, and he proved his greatness by moving up and beating some of the top heavyweights. Evander is strong and fast, and has a good chin. I'm also impressed with the fact that he throws a lot of punches and lands a high percentage of them.



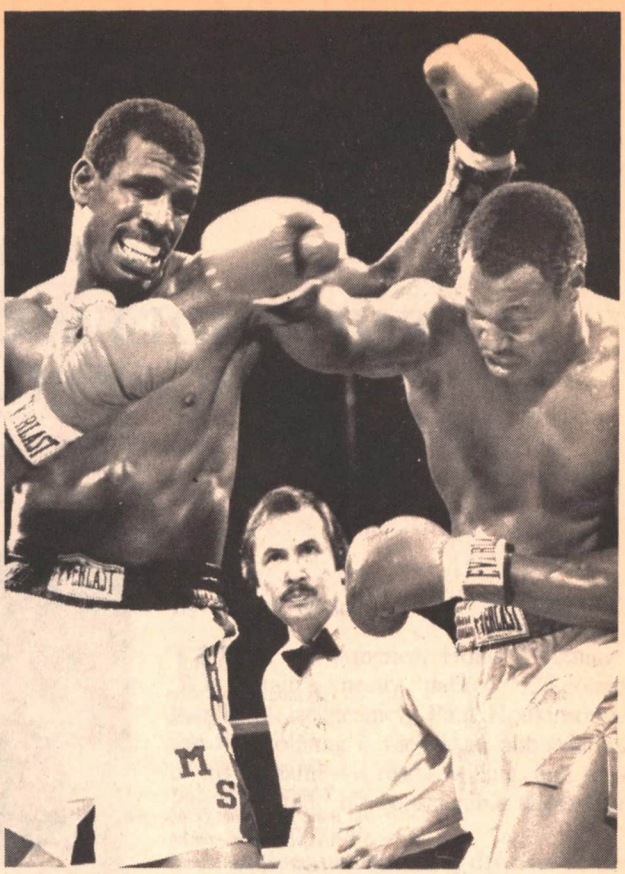
Spinks was awkward, but it was part of his style. His awkward offense became his defense. He was very hard to hit. He had a very good jab and right hand, and he moved well on his feet. He was a good thinker in the ring, adjusting well and showing good ring generalship.

Spinks would establish the pace early on. Evander stands straight up, so Spinks would score with his jab, and offset Holyfield's attack with lateral movement. But Holyfield would close the gap in the second or third round. Spinks would be forced to trade blows. He couldn't keep Holyfield off him with the jab. And Holyfield could counter well against him. Holyfield would press the action and start catching Spinks with hard punches in rounds eight and nine. I feel that Holyfield would wear Spinks down and stop him in the 10th.

Dwight Qawi, a former world champion at light heavyweight and cruiserweight, lost to both Spinks (as Dwight Braxton) and Holyfield.



Holyfield's gutty July 1986 points win over Dwight Qawi was the most exciting fight in cruiserweight history. The rivals blasted away for 15 draining rounds.

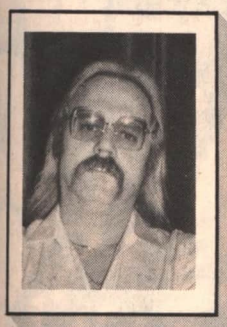


Spinks made history in September 1985, when he became the first light heavyweight champion to conquer a reigning heavyweight king by topping Larry Holmes.

JOHNNY BOS

Damn. This is a tough one to call, especially since Spinks never fought at the weight, and neither guy lost until meeting a bigger and better man.

Holyfield epitomizes heart, determination, and guts. He throws a lot of punches. He's always busy in the ring. He doesn't let his opponent rest. His punches are crisp, but they don't have the power you would expect.



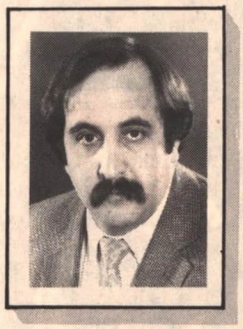
Spinks always focused on what he had to do. I never saw him lose his cool. It's hard to picture him at 190 pounds, since he never fought at cruiserweight. But he did go 30 tough rounds with Larry Holmes. Even though he gained 30 pounds, he didn't lose any of his sharpness. He looked like the same fighter. And that was damm good.

Spinks would start off circling away. He'd catch Holyfield with jabs, then sneak in a right hand. But Holyfield would close the distance and dominate the middle rounds. He'd score with hooks to the body and make Spinks fight the fight of his life. Spinks, with his back to the ropes, would catch Holyfield coming in with a right uppercut. That would turn the tide of the fight back to Spinks. He'd then go back to jabbing and scoring with the right. Spinks would win a close and controversial decision.

Johnny Bos is a veteran manager and booking agent. Among his charges is former two-division champion Joey Gamache.

CEDRIC KUSHNER

Spinks was always in good condition and had excellent temperament. I was always impressed with the consistent high-level performances he gave. He very rarely had an off-day. His jab was as effective as any I've seen in the past 10 years. It wasn't powerful, but it got the job done.



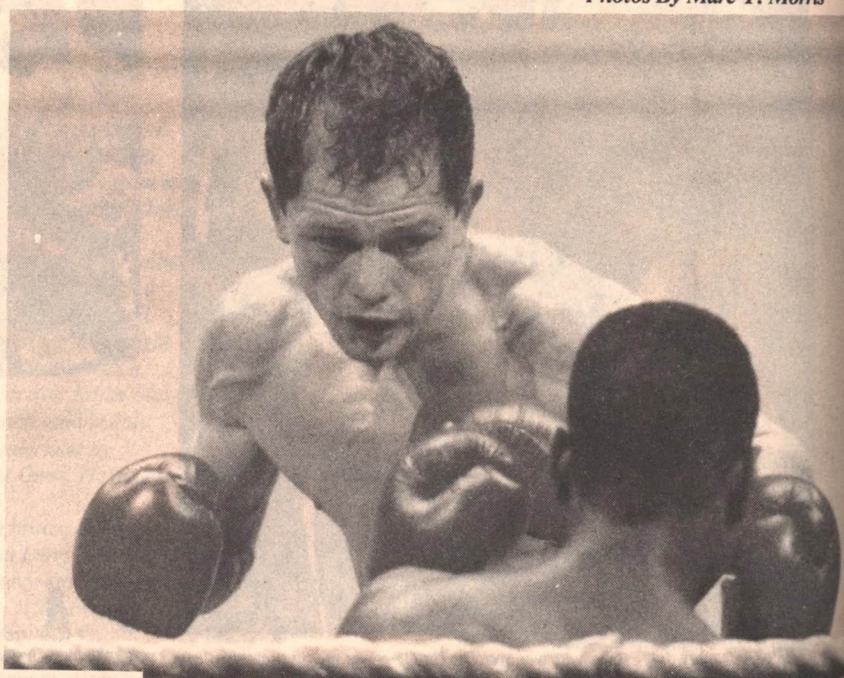
Holyfield can bring the fight to his opponent like few men in the game today. His intensity, courage, toughness, and superior conditioning set him apart from most champions. His first fight with Dwight Qawi was one of the most exciting fights that I've ever witnessed. I had the feeling then that we'd be seeing some exceptional things from him.

Holyfield would take the fight to Spinks. He'd be the aggressor from the opening bell. Spinks would jab and move away from Holyfield's right hands. But sooner or later Spinks would have to stop and exchange, and when he would, Holyfield would pound away at his body and head. Every exchange would slow Spinks down more. He'd need more than a jab to keep Holyfield away.

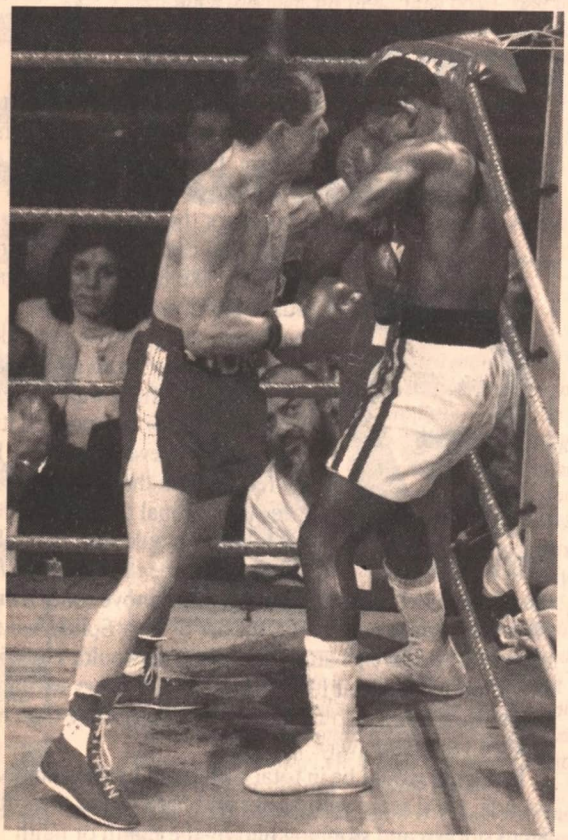
Holyfield would be in total command by the middle rounds. He'd score with hooks and hard rights, wearing Spinks down and stopping him by the eighth or ninth round.

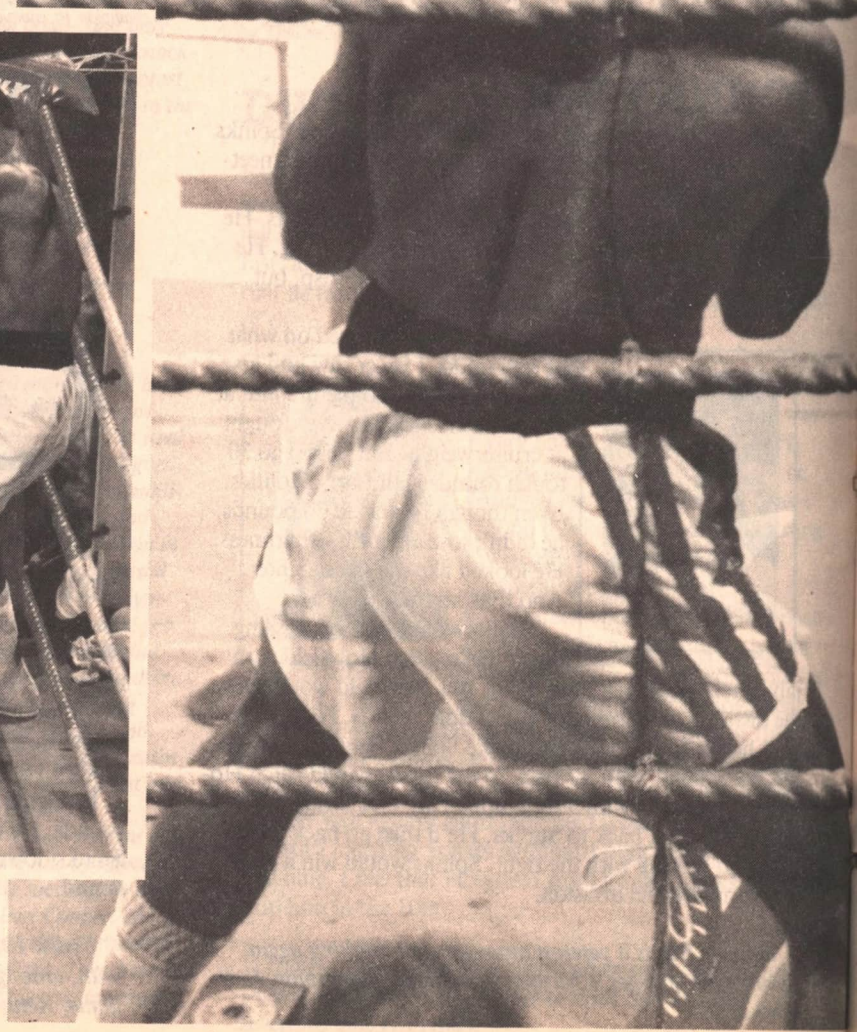
Cedric Kushner is a globetrotting promoter who works with, among others, world champions Prince Charles Williams, Kennedy McKinney, and Orlando Canizales. ■

Photos By Marc Y. Morris



As soon as Hodkinson zeroed in on Cepeda (right), he was able to dish out plenty of punishment (below). Afterward, yet another victory celebration for the unbeaten English featherweight (opposite page).





BRITISH FEATHERWEIGHT KING PAUL HODKINSON

Will America Go Loco For Hoko?

By Patrick Myler

Watch out America, Hoko is coming. Britain's neatly packed 126-pound bundle of belligerency, Paul Hodkinson—the "Hoko" tag is merely an abbreviation of his surname—is ready, willing, and anxious to parade his considerable talents for U.S. consumption.

After three undemanding defenses of the WBC featherweight crown he captured from Marcos Villasana two years ago, the 27-year-old Liverpool thumper, 22-1-1 (21), must now face mandatory challenger Kevin Kelley. If the fight goes to purse offers, it is expected that the Yanks will dangle the juicier carrot.

In February, unbeaten New Yorker Kelley, 32-0 (23), was ringside at London's Olympia Arena to get a first-hand glimpse of Hodkinson's brand of demolition. Ricardo Cepeda, a New York-based Puerto Rican who took with him a highly flattering 23-2-1 record, had been inactive since suffering a three-round hammering from Jose Vidal in March last year. The WBC, in a benevolent gesture, sponged him down, handed him a number-eight rating, and let him head off as suitable cannon fodder for the grateful English titleholder. Like the man said way back when, he shudda stood in bed.

Cepeda, whose only other loss had been to Villasana on a wide points verdict in a 1991 title fight, looked nervous as he stepped in to face the superbly fit, raring-to-go Hodkinson. To his credit, he was prepared to meet the British bulldog head-on. Brave, but not wise.

Hodkinson, a superb pressure fighter whose only obvious weakness is a tendency to swell up around the eyebrows (his sole defeat was in his first meeting with Villasana, when, well ahead, he told the referee, "I can't see," and the fight was stopped), pounded Cepeda with a wide assortment of punches to force a fourth-round halt.

The Puerto Rican, pinned in his own corner, was rescued after just 37 seconds of the round when his cornerman, Negro Gonzalez, reached into the ring and restrained Hodkinson, 125, from administering further hurt and humiliation to his charge. Swiss referee Franz Marti shared Gonzalez' compassion and called off the slaughter.

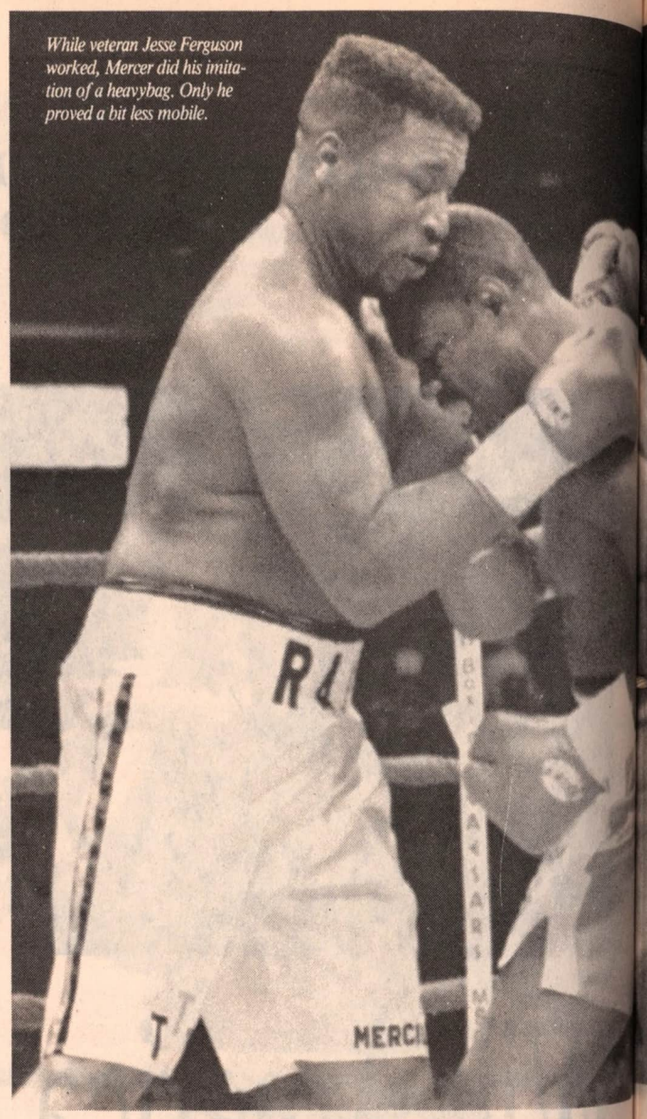
(Continued on page 65)

Not Being All That He Can Be

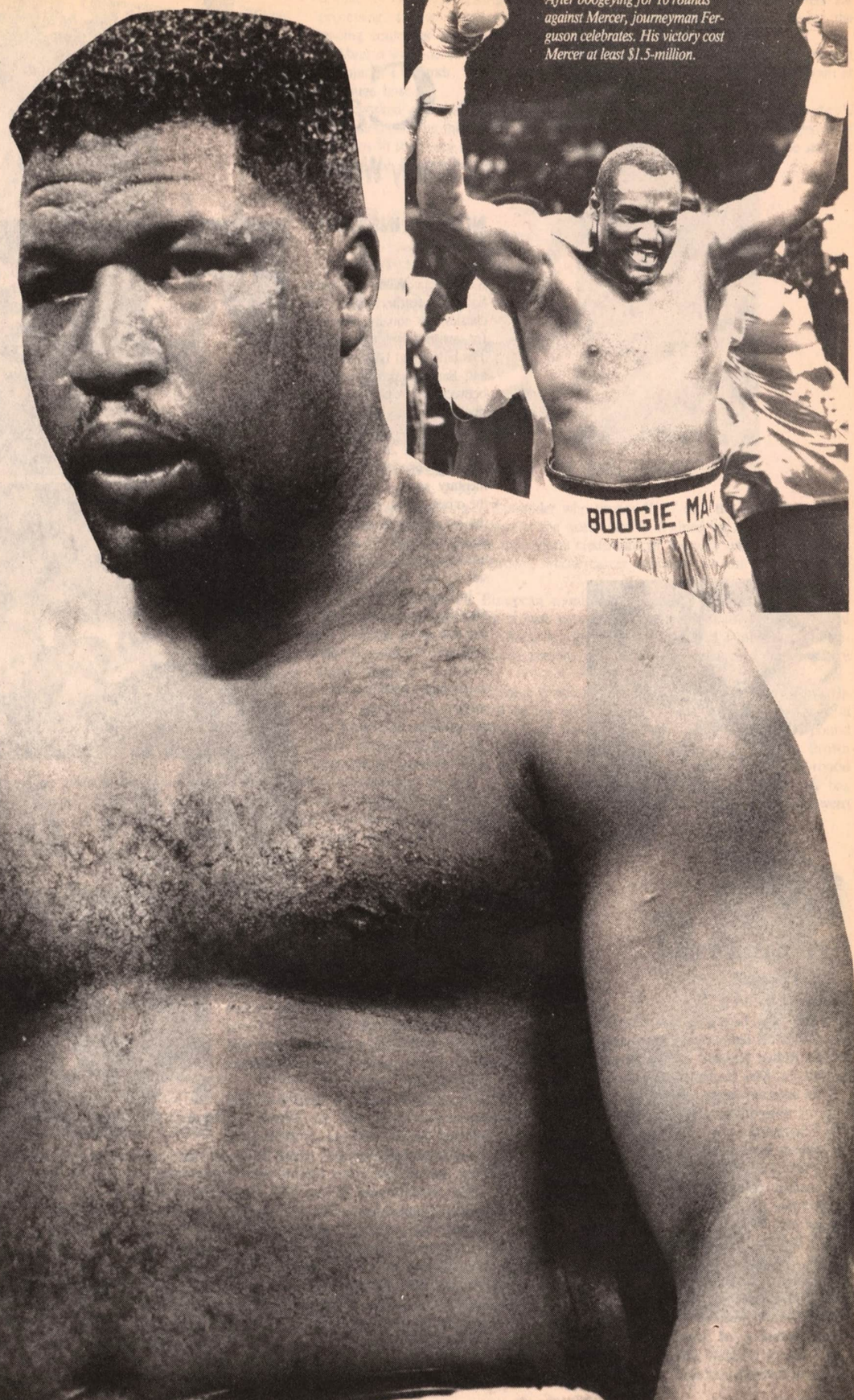
THE WASTED CAREER OF RAY MERCER

By Joseph C. Tintle

Photos By Al Bello



While veteran Jesse Ferguson worked, Mercer did his imitation of a heavybag. Only he proved a bit less mobile.



After boogeying for 10 rounds against Mercer, journeyman Ferguson celebrates. His victory cost Mercer at least $1.5-million.

After Ray Mercer dropped a unanimous 10-round decision to trialhorse Jesse Ferguson in February, he tried to block out the boos and catcalls as he headed back to his dressing room at Madison Square Garden. That's where the real fighting took place.

No sooner was Mercer inside than his manager, Jack Dell, began screaming at the heavyweight. Dell had just learned that Mercer had pulled a back muscle four days before the fight.

"You're not man enough to tell me your f____ back is out," Dell shouted.

There was silence for a moment.

"Then fire me," Dell bellowed. "Fire the whole f____ bunch of us."

A moment later, something ricocheted off the wall. It sounded like a metal folding chair. Make that *two* metal folding chairs.

Then Dell walked into the hallway.

"Where's Hank Johnson?" he snapped.

The trainer spoke up.

"Did Ray say anything about his back to you?"

Johnson mumbled, and Dell motioned him inside and closed the door. Their exchange lasted a minute or so. Johnson explained that he knew about Mercer's injury, and that it had been his decision not to tell anyone.

"We have a bad reputation of pulling out of fights," Johnson later told *The Ring*. "I took a gamble and I lost."

Dell turned away, straightened his collar, smoothed back his hair, and headed off to watch the Riddick Bowe-Michael Dokes fight. (Repeated attempts to reach Dell for comment proved unsuccessful).

When Mercer met the press, he explained that he hadn't done much with Ferguson because his injury prevented him from launching an all-out attack. This wasn't the first time he had lost to someone he was expected to beat. Those who watched Mercer lose a unanimous decision to 42-year-old Larry Holmes last year saw a free-swinging powerpuncher miss his mark for 12 rounds. After that fight, Mercer was asked what he thought he'd have to do to beat Holmes if they ever faced one another again.

"Learn how to box," he replied.

Mercer's assessment was correct. But he should have added that he needed to learn how to train, too. The trouble was that the 1988 Olympic gold medalist showed no improvement in either department from the night he fought Holmes in February 1992 to February '93, when Ferguson hooked him silly.

(Continued on page 57)

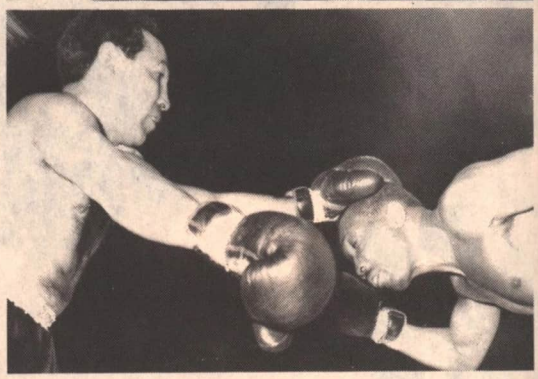
With files of more than three million black-and-white and color negatives, *The Ring* magazine photo collection is by far the largest in the world. Each issue, we'll pore through the files to bring you some of the most unique boxing photographs ever taken

Time Capsules

By Stanley Weston

NOT SO INSTANT REPLAY

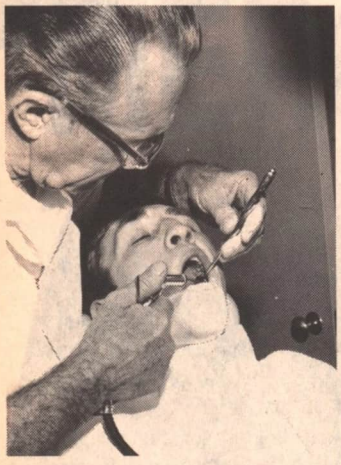
(December 1, 1966)



The four Willie Pep-Sandy Saddler featherweight title classics are equally renowned for artistry and eye-gouging. The bitter feud between Willie and Sandy was not confined between the ropes of a prize ring. In more than 10 years following their last bloodbath, on September 26, 1951, never did either one have a complimentary word to say about the other. But in the mid-'60s, the ice started to thaw. They began to attend the same testimonial dinners, and even sat side by side on the same dais.

In December 1966, 15 years after Saddler stopped Pep to end the series, the old rivals were asked to box a couple of rounds "for sweet charity." Surprisingly, both immediately agreed. Said Sandy, a wide grin splitting his scarred face, "But I'm gonna wear shatter-proof glasses over my eyes."

The top picture, taken in their unforgettable second fight (in 1949), catches Pep in the act, his open right glove filling Sandy's left eye. In the 1966 charity exhibition (bottom), Pep appears to be trying to recreate the old days as he holds down Saddler's head with his left glove and prepares for "surgery" with his right. Hey, Sandy, you forgot your goggles!



"I'D RATHER BE FIGHTING"

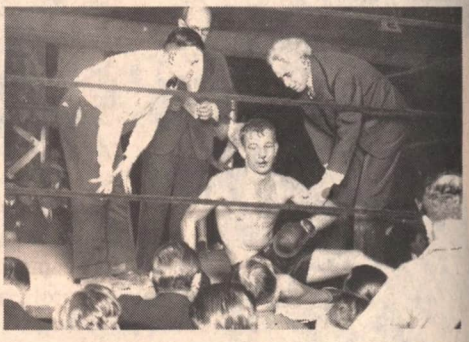
(February 9, 1971)

Three days before he was scheduled to defend the lightweight crown against tough Ruben Navarro in Los Angeles, Scotland's Ken Buchanan was stricken by an infected tooth. There was even talk of postponing the fight. But after the champion was examined by a prominent local dentist, there was a ray of hope. The doctor fully understood the danger of the situation, but concluded that three days was enough time to perform the required treatment and allow Buchanan to sufficiently recover.

On February 12, 1971, Buchanan performed brilliantly against local hero Navarro and retained the title by capturing a well-deserved 15-round decision. Speaking of well-deserved, the good doctor certainly earned a right to share in Kenny's victory.

BUSTED BUDDY

(February 9, 1928)



Bud Taylor looks like anything but a world champion as he sits glassy-eyed and helpless on the floor while officials try to coax him back to his senses. You would never know from looking at this picture that Taylor was one of the most feared fighters of his time, a ruthless slugger who got his kicks brutalizing opponents before finally lowering the boom.

But as is so often the case, even with champions, Taylor had his nemesis, an awkward Jewish kid out of Milwaukee named Joey Sangor. Joey's record wasn't all that impressive. Even in his prime, he rarely made *The Ring's* top 10. But when fighting Bud Taylor, Sangor looked like a champion of champions.

They fought a total of four times. In their first meeting in 1926, Taylor was gifted with a 10-round decision. Sangor was to later comment, "I learned his weaknesses the first time. I found that if you keep moving to his right side, he gets confused. He lets down his guard, and his feet get tangled."

Their second fight ended in a no-decision, but Joey was the clear winner on the unofficial scorecards. Sangor owned Bud in the third match, hammering out a clear decision. Taylor's bantamweight crown wasn't at stake. Neither was Bud's crown on the line in the fourth and final match, the jewel of their classic series. Nothing Taylor tried that night worked. And everything Sangor tried worked to perfection.

Never in his long, illustrious career was Bud so brutalized. He began the seventh round by stumbling, rubber-legged, out of his corner, and walked straight into a jolting left hook, immediately followed by a right cross that caused blood to spout from his mouth. The blinding, two-fisted attack that followed left Taylor a quivering wreck on the canvas—but still champion of the world.

GEORGIE GOT RESPECT

(May 6, 1941)

When newly sworn-in Seaman Georgie Abrams, United States Navy, stepped out of the airplane at Jacksonville (Florida) Naval Air Station, he was greeted on the tarmac by two high-ranking naval officers and escorted to base headquarters for processing. It was a reception reserved for members of Congress—and for the leading contender for the middleweight championship of the world.

Abrams was one of the elite group of boxers recruited by the former heavyweight champion, Lt. Cmdr. Tunney, to supervise the Navy's physical training program at the huge base.

"I worked with thousands of young sailors," recalled Georgie. "I thought they'd never stop pouring into Jacksonville. It was a lot of fun, and I am just as proud of my days in the Navy as I am of my career in the ring. There's a lot to be said for that special feeling that goes with serving your country."

THE BELT IS NOT ON THE LINE

(January 4, 1932)

Just imagine a 116-pounder who towers 5'11" into the air, reigns as the bantamweight champion of the world, and is destined for the *The Ring* Hall of Fame. Such were the unique credentials of the very unique athlete they called Panama Al Brown, whose career spanned two full decades (1922-1942).

There wasn't a European country Brown missed while criss-crossing the globe and captivating crowds with his extraordinary skills. He also wowed them all over North Africa, in Algiers, Casablanca, and Tunis. But, strangely, and for unexplained reasons, he very rarely performed in his native Panama.

No titlist was ever more proud of his championship belt than Brown. In fact, he often insisted on his precious belt being prominently displayed in arenas where he fought. Such was the case when he faced 5'2", 112-pound Filipino Speedy Dado at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles. Brown had one of the few off-nights of his long career, and he lost the 10-round decision. Luckily, it was a non-title bout, and when he packed his bag before leaving the dressing room, Al's belt was safely tucked away between his jockstrap and his well-worn purple robe.

THE GREATEST OF THEM ALL

(October 15, 1959)

On a freezing fall afternoon, Jack Dempsey (right) invited Abe Attell (center) to a surprise party at his famous New York restaurant. Among the 25 invited guests, all members of boxing's elite fraternity, was Max Baer (left), who flew in from California because "little Abe is one of my favorite people. He was always there when I needed help. Any kind of help. He warned me to stay away from certain guys, and he made sure to let me know who I could trust. He also taught me how to throw a left jab. I owe that man an awful lot."

As everyone knows, Attell was certainly one of the greatest fighters who ever lived. Renowned promoter, referee, and entrepreneur Tex Rickard called Attell "the best of the best. His likes will never be seen again."

Abe's fabled career spanned the years 1900-1917, and he held the world featherweight championship for six years.

The original of this photo was autographed by both Baer and Dempsey and presented to Attell during the party. Wrote Dempsey, "To my pal Abe, the greatest of all. Lots of luck, Abe . . . Jack Dempsey." Wrote Baer, "Abe, when the good Lord made you, He put the pattern aside. You were the greatest. Your pal . . . Max Baer."

"I'LL MAKE YOU A NEW MAN"

(September 12, 1936)

Charles Atlas, world-famous body-builder and molder of bodies beautiful, was searching for a model to appear in his new magazine advertisements. While vacationing in Puerto Rico, he was introduced to the island's most idolized citizen, world bantamweight champion Sixto Escobar. At first sight, Atlas knew he had found the perfect model.

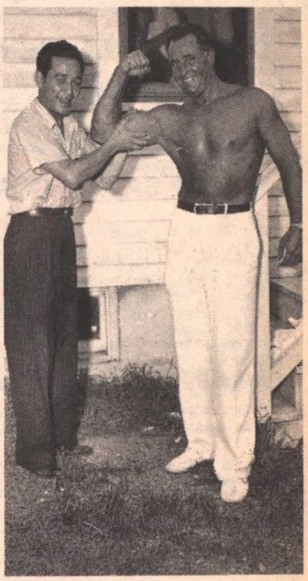
"But first, we must take a nice picture of you and me together," Charlie told the astonished boxer.

The picture, carefully set up by master pitchman Atlas, showed the body-builder, perfectly proportioned and sun-baked a golden bronze, with anemic-looking, 118-pound Escobar, who is struggling to wrap his tiny hands around Charlie's pumped up bicep.

"Perfect," proclaimed Atlas. "This picture will make you famous."

"I think people already know me," replied little Sixto in his best English.

Charlie had no answer for that.



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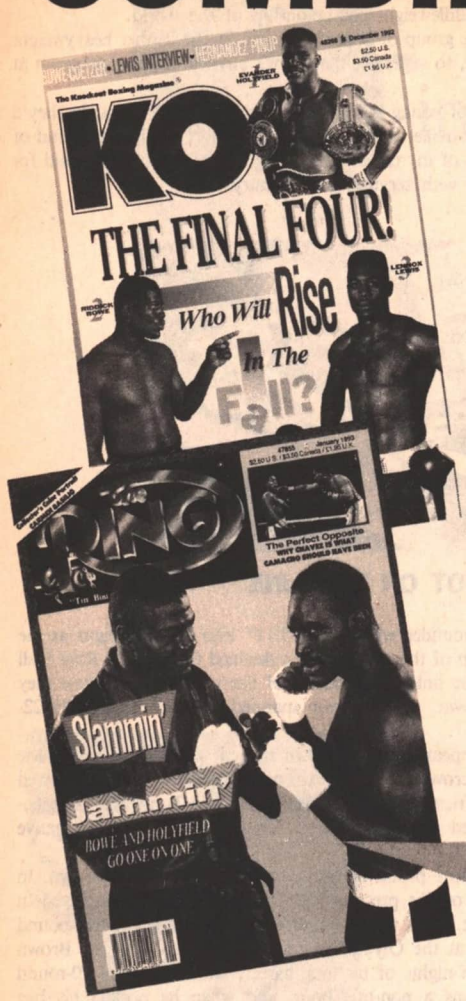

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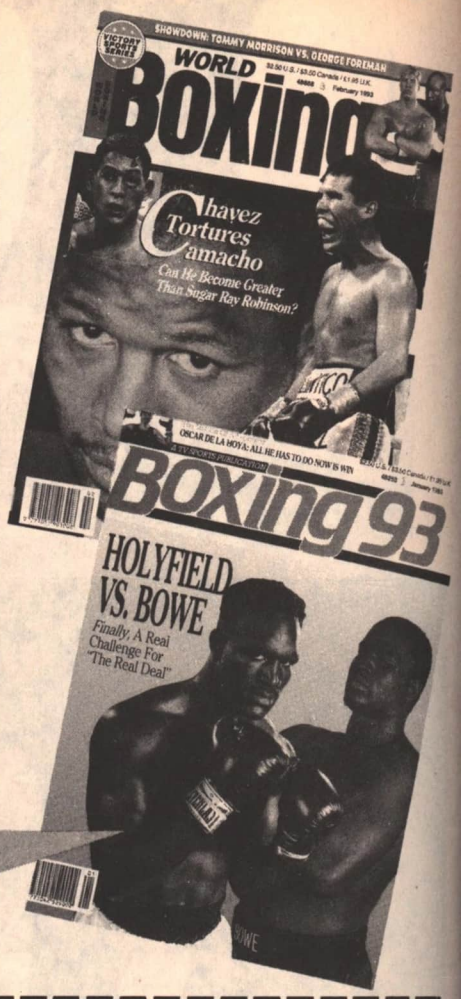

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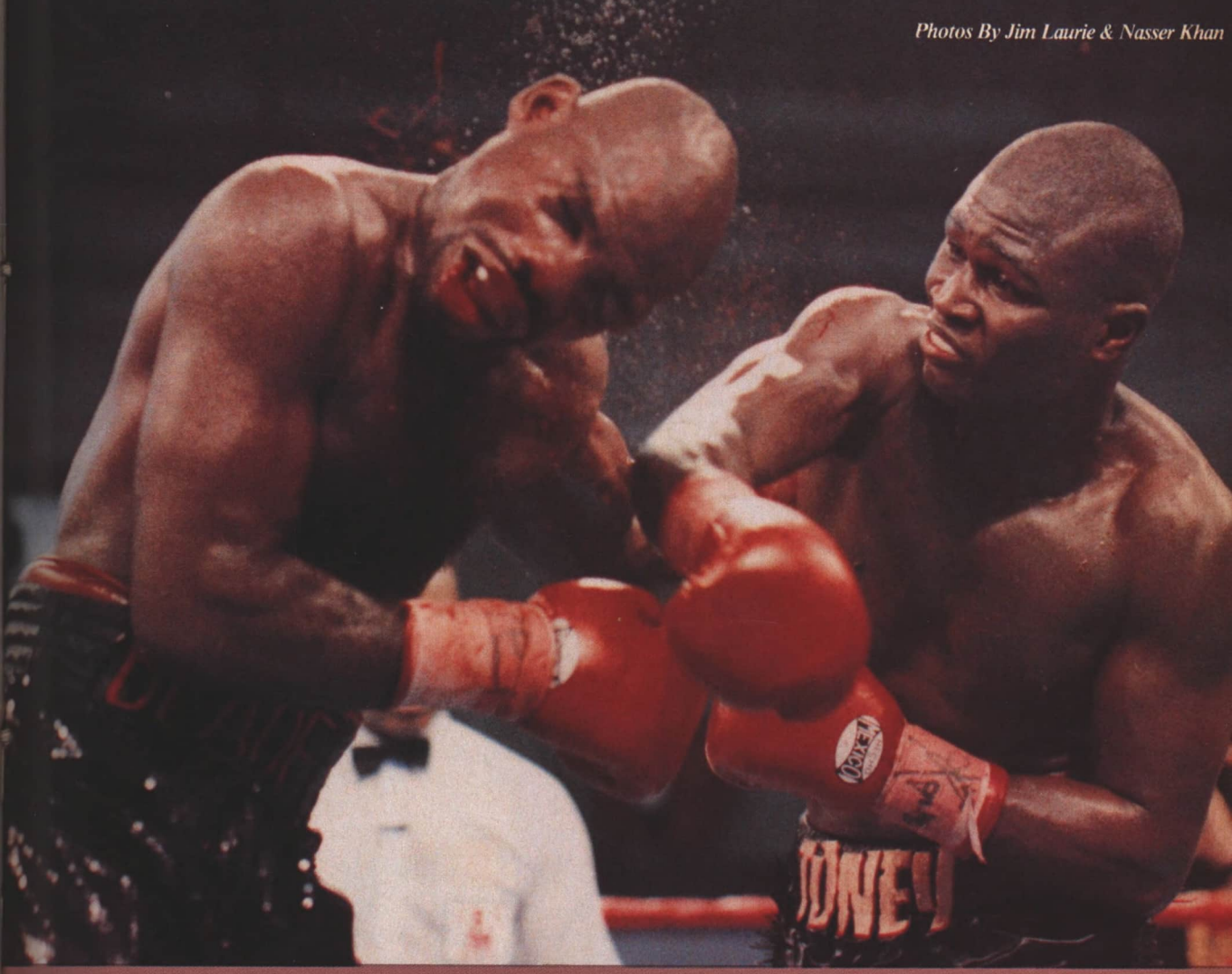
JAMES TONEY CRUSHES IRAN BARKLEY

Making His Anger Work For Him

Photos By Jim Laurie & Nasser Khan



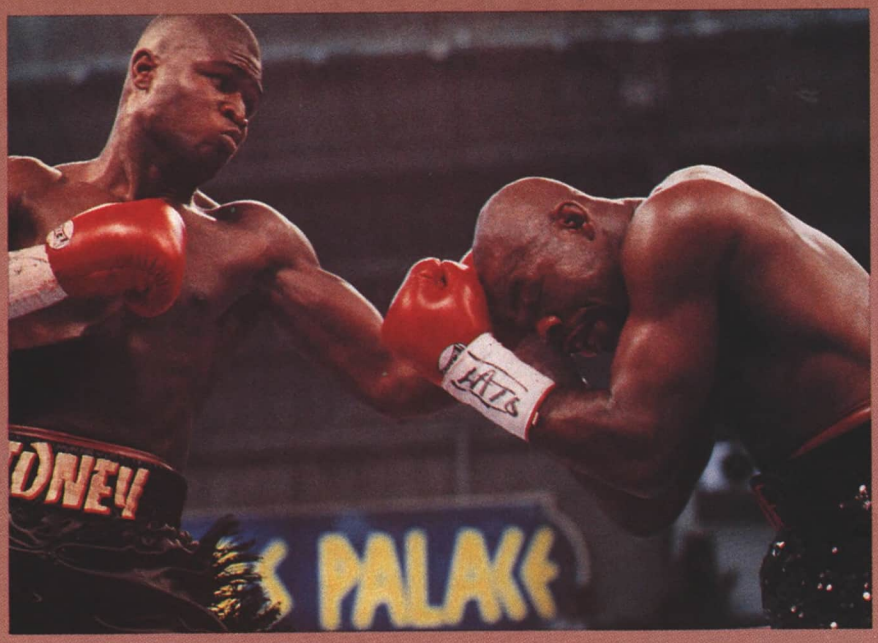
By Mike O'Hara

Boxing better get used to having James Toney to kick around. He's the bad kid on the block, and he isn't moving away.

Moving up? Yes. But moving out? Not soon. And probably not ever, by choice.

The scowl. The snarl. The barbed comments. The demand for respect and recognition. Get used to them. They're all part of the package that makes Toney one of the more interesting fighters in the game today. And there is more to the newly crowned IBF super middleweight champion than talk. Toney has put his money where his mouth is, and he is cashing in.

Toney's commanding performance in dethroning IBF super middleweight champion Iran Barkley at Las Vegas' Caesars Palace Sports Pavilion moved him up several notches in stature. It was a pivotal fight at a crucial moment in Toney's career. Despite having held



After Toney battered Barkley for a few rounds (above), the defending champion was quite a sad sight (right).

the IBF middleweight title since 1991, and retaining it through six defenses, there were more questions about Toney than answers.

There were questions about whether his complaints about making the middleweight division's limit of 160 pounds were legitimate. Were they just excuses for some lackluster performances and an apparent lack of punching power? Some wondered whether Toney had the ring smarts to follow a fight plan through a long bout. And others, notably heavyweight contender and HBO commentator George Foreman, questioned Toney's strategies and work ethic. Toney often coasted through long stretches of rounds, in the manner of an older fighter conserving energy, instead of pressing the action. By doing so, he left himself open to questionable decisions in going the distance with the likes of Reggie Johnson and Dave Tiberi.

And then there were the incidents at press conferences and promotional appearances that made Toney appear to be every bit the tough kid he says he was while growing up on those rollicking maize-and-blue mean streets of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

All of this baggage was carried into the fight with Barkley, and it seemed heavier than the eight-pound difference between the middleweight and super middleweight divisions. The trouble with Toney, or so it seemed, was that he had an image and tried to live up to it. If all the baggage wasn't discarded, Toney carried it comfortably on his back while beating Barkley in impressive fashion.

For Toney, the Barkley fight, and events leading up to it, were a microcosm of his career, with the sound and the fury adding a sideshow that threatened to overshadow anything that would happen in the ring.

The bout was the crowning point of Toney's career to date. He has never been more in control of a bout against a quality opponent. Perhaps there is a cooler, gentler side than the one we have seen at press conferences, when he is likely to challenge opponents and reporters alike.

Consider his comment three days before the Barkley fight, when a Las Vegas reporter questioned Toney about his personality: "Kiss my black ass."

Moments later, the two were joking.

Next came a question about Toney's 12-round decision over Mike McCallum last August.

"The bleep-bleeper didn't want to fight," Toney said.

He looked the reporter in the eye and continued. "It was a boring fight, you wrote. I read your article about me before I left. Hey, it's okay."

There was another question about his style, and why he fights so often.

"That's my choice," he said. "People are putting their money out for these big fights, like last week in Madison Square Garden [for the Riddick Bowe-Michael Dokes stinkeroo]. That's a bleeping joke."

Then a Detroit reporter wanted to know about a tiff between Barkley and Toney at a press conference two weeks earlier.

"Where were you?" Toney answered.

"At the Super Bowl."

"Well, the Super Bowl isn't going on now. That changed everything. I used to like Barkley. Now he's on my s____ side. I don't like people like that."

Maybe they'll never call Toney "Sweet Baby James." Then again, he'll never ask anybody to, either.

"I'm just trying to get my respect," he says.

And there were still a few more jabs for Barkley and his style.

"Pressure doesn't mean nothin'," Toney said scornfully. "Just because he's big and ugly doesn't mean I'm supposed to be scared of him. You can't miss that big, ugly head of his."

All of this would have been meaningless had Toney not had the ability to back it up. He redefined the old playground saying, "It ain't bragging if you can do it." Because he did it.

Suddenly, Toney's star is again rising in a group of fighters who are

rejuvenating the middleweight divisions. Some think the '90s could be a rebirth of the late-'70s and early- to mid-'80s, when Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Roberto Duran, and Thomas Hearns held forth as the Big Four in a glittering constellation of stars who overshadowed the heavyweights.

At middleweight and super middleweight, fighters from among the talented group of Michael Nunn, Bernard Hopkins, Lamar Parks, Julian Jackson, Roy Jones, Gerald McClellan, Tim Littles, Nigel Benn, Chris Eubank, and Toney could comprise the next version of the Big Four. And Toney, only 24 and having won two titles in a span of a little more than 20 months, might be the brightest of the new stars.

"I think everybody likes competition," he says. "The super middleweights are the ones that are getting some recognition. The super middleweight division is *hot*."

And nobody is hotter than Toney. Rough edges and all, he validated his position with his victory over Barkley. The road to megabucks now leads through Toney, and, as he has always been, he is willing to accommodate all challengers.

"I don't duck nobody," he says. "I'm not going to sit on it for seven or eight months, like most champions do. I want to fight by the start of April, and maybe June."

Toney has been a willing middleweight champion, as his half-dozen defenses and two non-title bouts indicate. He has come a long way from what was supposed to be a corn-country tuneup for then-IBF champion Michael Nunn. He is also a *former* middleweight champion. Before the Barkley fight, he said he was through as a middleweight, much to the consternation of his manager, Jackie Kallen, who preferred that Toney wait until after beating Barkley to announce his abdication. Just in case.

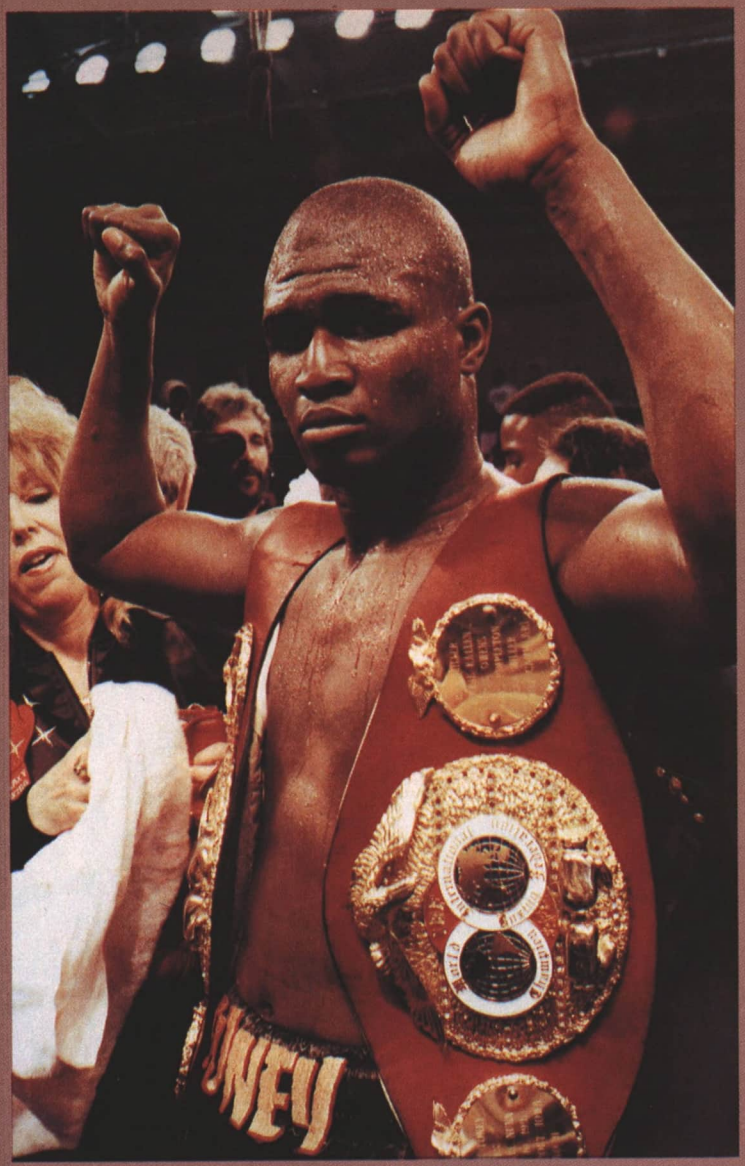
His training regimen for the Barkley fight convinced Toney that it was time for him to rise in weight. He looked trim and sharp at 167 pounds.

"I can go out and eat a full-course meal now," he said. "Before, I couldn't do that. I was losing power."

Then again, if the price is right . . .

"They'll have to come up with the money," he says. "Twenty million will do it. I could still fight and win. It would take $20-million to go back down."

(Continued on page 54)



After Toney added his second IBF belt (above), he calmly met the press with manager Jackie Kallen and promoter Bob Arum (below). He even complimented Barkley, tipping his cap in the process.

Photo By David Lee Waite

NOW THAT KENNEDY McKINNEY'S CLEAN ...

By Robert Cassidy

There was a brief period when time stood still for Kennedy McKinney. It was during his Olympic experience of 1988, and it wasn't so much the competition, but the event itself. It was pure and wholesome. A red, white, and blue existence framed in gold. It was boxing, perhaps even life, the way McKinney envisioned it to be. He still savors having marched in the opening ceremony and living in the Olympic Village. They are a pair of salvageable memories in a life that collapsed from within.

The boxing competition in Seoul is a blur to McKinney. The 22-year-old Army grunt sprinted through the field, scoring two first-round knockouts and winning two 5-0 decisions en route to a gold medal. All those years of training and sacrifice culminated quicker than he could say "signing bonus."

McKinney, the valedictorian of the Class of '88, entered pro boxing with a $75,000 check from Top Rank, and was then turned loose on Las Vegas. It was far from the Olympic Village in Seoul, and even farther from the Olympic Ideal. That's when things got blurry again. For the next two years, McKinney meandered through life in a cocaine-induced daze.

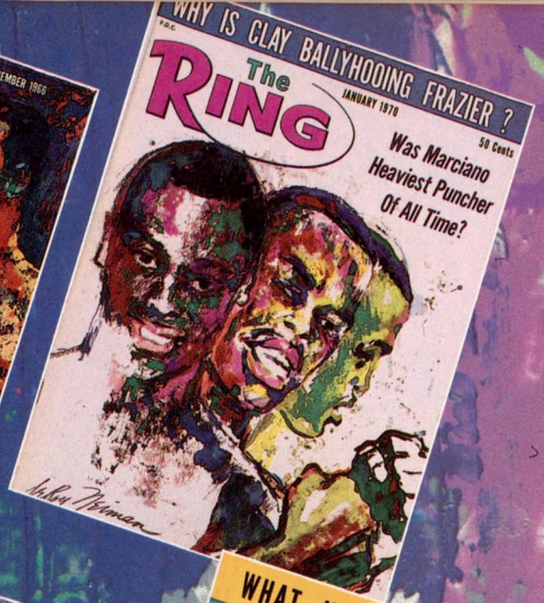
For the moment, McKinney has managed to suppress the demons that have ravaged his life. He won the IBF ju-

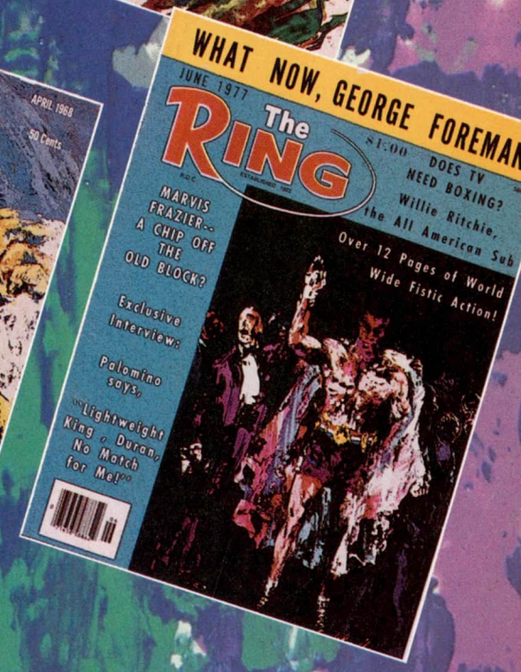
(Continued on page 61)

McKinney was at his best when he stopped former champion Paul Banke in March 1992.

Can He Clean Up The Jr. Feather Division?

A Love Affair With Boxing





LeRoy Neiman

Boxing has fascinated famed artist LeRoy Neiman ever since he was a kid growing up in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"When I wasn't boxing, I was sketching fighters in the gym," he recalls.

Neiman's works are major treasures in many of the world's most prestigious private art collections and museums. The haunting portrait of heavyweight champion Riddick Bowe on this issue's cover is Neiman's fifth *Ring* cover, and clearly his best.

HOLY UNIFICATION, BATMAN, WHEN ARE YOU GONNA FIGHT THE JOKER?

By Jeff Ryan

THE CAST

Batman: Riddick Bowe
Robin: Rock Newman
Batgirl: Judy Bowe
The Joker: Lennox Lewis
The Riddler: Frank Maloney
Alfred the Butler: Eddie Futch
Commissioner Gordon: Commissioner Randy Gordon
Catwoman: Kathy Duva
The Penguin: Dan Duva
Egghead: Shelly Finkel
Mr. Freeze: Jose Sulaiman

*Before the threats of a lawsuit forced him to alter his attire and switch his nickname to "Big Daddy," the heavyweight division's bad man was also its Batman. Riddick "Batman" Bowe would wear a cape into the ring, punch out some bad guy, then brag to the media that he was an even bigger superhero than his super hero. The only thing missing was the requisite **OOF!, POW!,** and **THUD!** splashing across the TV screen when he went to work.*

*There were two options staring us in the face as we prepared a Bowe story for this issue of **The Ring:** Rehash the champ's one-round annihilation of Michael Dokes, or have some fun. As it usually does in life, fun won out.*

*Because boxing is all camp and foolishness anyway, we decided to see how Bowe's life would be playing out today if it were an episode of **Batman**, complete with a hyperactive sidekick, dastardly villains, seemingly inescapable perils, and—**purrrrrrrr**—Catwoman, too.*

If you thought the whole Bowe-Rock Newman-Lennox Lewis comedy-drama was driving you bat-ty before . . .

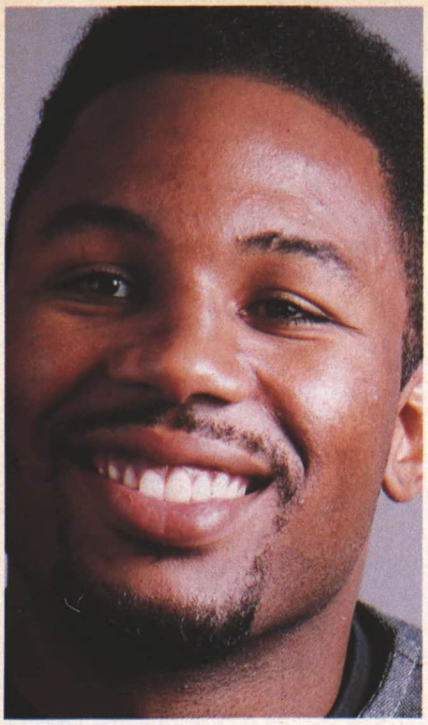
Scene One: Stately Bowe Manor in Fort Washington, Maryland. The red phone rings, and Alfred answers.

ALFRED: It's for you, Sir.
BOWE: Yes, commissioner?
COMM. GORDON: Batman, we have a problem here. Somehow, The Joker has gotten on the air on all of Gotham City's radio stations, and he's trying to brainwash the public. He was just on that all-sports radio station, WFAN, saying that he's going to take over and that you're afraid to meet him face to face. Do something, big guy. He's tarnishing your good name, threatening the security of the boxing world as we know it, and, worst of all, making me more nervous than I was the morning I woke up and realized that I had licensed Michael Dokes!
BOWE: We're on on our way. To the Bowepoles, uh, *Batpoles,* Robin.

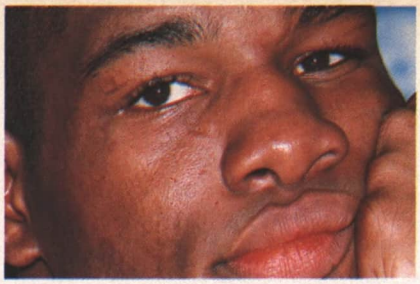
It is nail-biting time in Gotham City. After emerging from its secret underground hideaway, the Batmobile is besieged by autograph-seekers at every traffic light. Traffic on the Capital Beltway is at a crawl. The Garden State Parkway has two lanes closed for construction. Worst of all, there is a jack-knifed tractor-trailer at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel, and cars are backed up for miles.

ROBIN: Holy alternate-side-of-the-street parking, Batman! I told you your nickname was a bad idea. Aaron "Superman" Davis will probably beat us there by an hour.

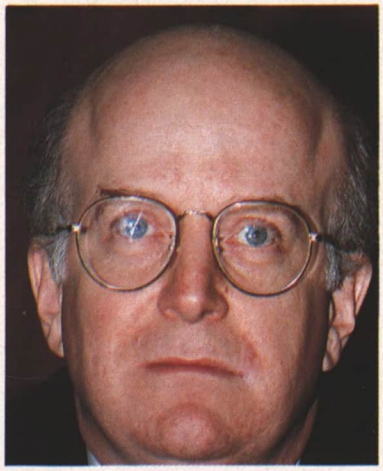
Scene Two: A press conference in the lobby of Gotham City Hall. The Joker and The Riddler are laughing hysterically when The Caped Crusader and Boy Wonder finally arrive.
JOKER: Well, well, well, if it's not The Hyped Crusader and his tag-along, Boy Blunder. We thought you'd never show up. What took you so long? Misplace your courage and have to search for it? Hah, hah, hah, hah, hah. Wait, I'll get a microscope and help you look for it. Hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah.
BOWE: You can choke on those chortles, Joker. We would have been here sooner, but we had more important business to tend to first.
ROBIN: Yeah, Batgirl made us stop at Bloomingdale's.
JOKER: Well, the joke is on you, Dynamic Duo. That belt that you tossed away in the garbage can is really your utility belt. Those other



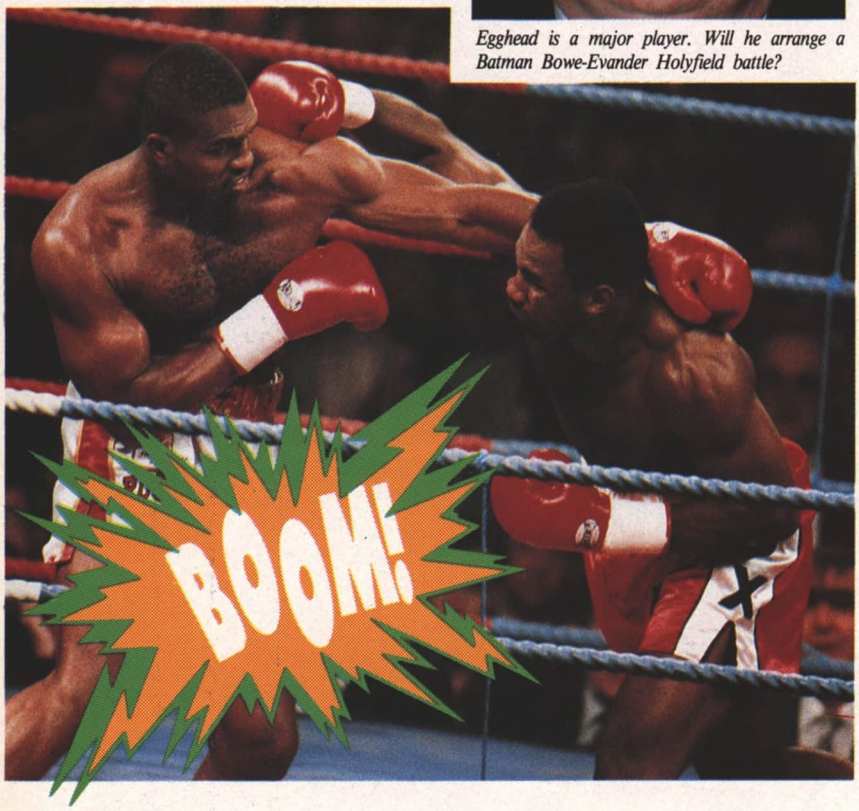
The Joker knows that after a showdown with Batman Bowe, he'll be laughing all the way to the bank.



Batman Bowe ponders his next move. Will he be shamed into a battle with The Joker?



Egghead is a major player. Will he arrange a Batman Bowe-Evander Holyfield battle?



two that you're wearing are useless. *Useless.* Now *I* have all the powers you once possessed. Now *I* can press a button and release that secret gas that clouds the thinking process of all the executives who sign the checks at HBO. Hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah, hah.

ROBIN: Quick, look out the window! Holy windchill factor! Mr. Freeze just drove up in a Good Humor truck, but he doesn't look to be in good humor.

COMM. GORDON: And look at that gang of despicable thugs that's with him!

ROBIN: How do you like that? He brought along the WBC ratings committtee.

Mr. Freeze enters and is immediately given the cold shoulder.

BATMAN: Chill out, Mr. Freeze. We're not in the mood for any of your ice capades.

MR. FREEZE: Shut your mouth or I'll do to you what I did to Ray Mercer before he fought Jesse Ferguson.

ROBIN: What's that?

BATMAN: Froze him solid, Robin. It was Merciless. The guy just stood there for 10 rounds. Couldn't throw a punch. Had an iced-over look in his eyes.

MR. FREEZE: Now I'm going to freeze the WBC title.

ROBIN: Holy unification! You'll never get away with this!

The "Bad Man Of Brrrrrrr" points his freeze gun at the WBC belt, fires away, and covers it with icicles. Just then, Batgirl comes running into the building, shopping bags on both arms.

BATGIRL: Oh, my God! Batman! Robin! I just got a call from the police. Mr. Freeze ran into Alfred on the way here and he . . . he . . . he froze him.

ROBIN: Holy Zamboni, Batman! Papa Smurf? You mean he's . . .

BATMAN: Call him Popsicle Smurf now, Robin.

ROBIN: It's a good thing we just got the Bat-defroster back from the repair shop.

BATMAN: Sure is.

While Batman and Robin talk things over in a corridor away from the crowd, The Joker sneaks up, drops a poisonous smoke bomb at their feet, and scampers away before they realize what is happening. In an instant, the air around them is filled with a choking smoke.

ROBIN: Holy Marion Barry, Batman! The smoke . . . I'm . . . I'm . . . I'm . . . getting . . . sooooooooooooooooo . . . sleeeeeeeeee-peeeeeeeee.

BATMAN: Meeeeeeeeeeee . . . toooooooooooooooo.

Scene Three: We return from a commercial to find Batman and Robin hanging upside down, their hands bound and their feet hooked to the boom of a giant crane. A hundred feet beneath them is a giant target. Our heroes are about to be lowered at a torturously slow speed of six inches per second, and when their heads reach the bull's-eye, a mechanical chain of events will unfold, culminating with a computer-activated pen signing the names "Riddick Bowe" and "Rock Newman" on a 20-bout contract with Don King.

The contract calls for Bowe and Newman to turn over 97.4 percent of

all purse money to King. From the remaining 2.6 percent, the promoter will deduct expenses incurred during training at his Ohio camp. Bowe and Newman keep whatever is left.

RIDDLER: What is something that's not shallow, smells really bad, is a favorite expression of George Bush, and is exactly where you're headed?

BATMAN: I think he means deep doo doo, Robin.

ROBIN: Holy bungee cord, Batman! We're doomed!

BATMAN: Don't panic. Quick, how did we get out of that other big mess we were in?

ROBIN: You mean the time we were in the giant cake made out of quicksand? When we were tied to the clapper of that giant bell? When we were about to be sucked into that big machine and turned into postage stamps?

BATMAN: No, no, the *big* mess. When they were trying to hold us to the agreement we made for the Final Four.

ROBIN: That was easy. We just went back on our word and thumbed our noses at everyone. I don't think that's gonna work this time, Batman. It's hard to thumb your nose when you're upside down with your hands tied behind your back.

IS THIS FI-NAL-LY THE END? ARE BATMAN AND ROBIN FI-NAL-LY FACING A DILEMMA FROM WHICH THERE IS NO ESCAPE? IS THE PEN REALLY MIGHTIER—AND DEADLIER—THAN THE SWORD? ARE OUR HEROES IN BIC, BIC TROUBLE? HOLD YOUR BREATH UNTIL NEXT WEEK, BUT BE SURE TO TUNE IN. SAME BAT TIME, SAME BAT CHANNEL.

Scene One: Exhale. A smiling Batman and Robin are safe and sound, sitting in Commissioner Gordon's office while photographers snap away and excited reporters pepper them with questions.

ROBIN: Holy Houdini, Batman! Who would have thought that you'd be able to wriggle free of those wrist restraints, reach into your boot, and pull out that family-size bottle of Bat Wite-Out just in the nick of time?

BATMAN: I had a hunch that the pen that almost signed away our lives was the same one The Joker pocketed when he visited Bob Arum at the Top Rank office several months ago. Knowing that Arum always serves stale danish at his press conferences, I figured that he probably cut corners on his office supplies as well. Sure enough, Top Rank Inc. fills its fountain pens with Top Rank Ink, one of the cheapest—and most easy to obliterate—writing fluids on the market.

Batman Bowe was taken aback when the dreaded Mr. Freeze turned Papa Smurf into Popsicle Smurf.

COMM. GORDON: You're a genius, Batman!

REPORTER: About The Joker, Batman. He says you're running scared. When in the world are you going to fight him?

Before The Caped Crusader can answer, the door is kicked open. Re-

(Continued on page 54)

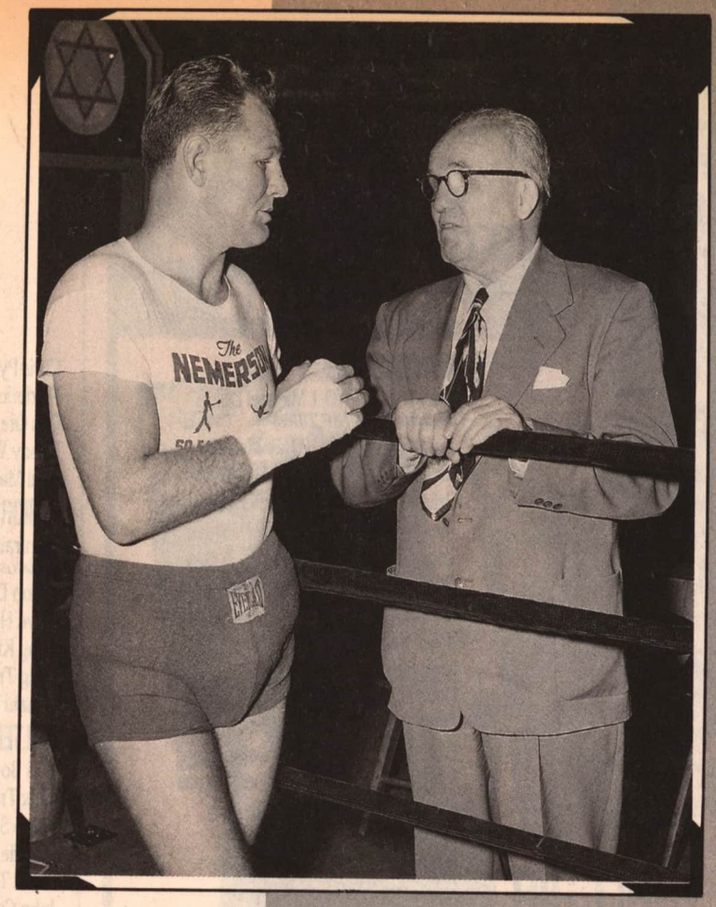
The Riddler has teamed with The Joker. Their goal: to discredit the dynamic duo of Batman Bowe and Robin.

Among those closest to Batman Bowe are the enchanting Batgirl (above) and trusty sidekick Rockin' Robin (right).

The Story Of The "St. Paul Phantom"

WHY MIKE GIBBONS COULDN'T WIN THE BIG ONE

Mike Gibbons had an uncanny genius with his fists. He whipped blows through the tiniest openings, and his effortless counterpunching frustrated any man into defeat



Middle: Mike Gibbons (right) spars with brother Tommy on the roof of a New York City office building in March 1917. Left: Gibbons visits with heavyweight contender Lee Savold in 1952.

By George Salvador

Up until just after World War II, there was an old man living in Schenectady, New York, who was one of the greatest boxing fans of all-time. He didn't know much about the New York boxing picture, but had recently come from St. Paul, Minnesota, after having lived most of his life there. The old man's name was James Garrity and nobody in boxing ever heard of him; he wasn't a pro, just a fan. A professional fan.

"For a while there, St. Paul was the greatest fight town in the country," old Garrity used to say, "with grand fighters like Mike O'Dowd, Johnny Ertle, Billy Miske, Jock Malone, Jimmy Delaney—it was like reading a list of somebody's Top 10. Topping the list, of course, were the Gibbons boys."

Old Garrity's eyes would mist over and he would go into a kind of trance.

"Tommy Gibbons was one of the finest light heavyweights of all-time, of course, but that Mike! I would say that no more than three, maybe four other middleweights in history could have licked him."

Those other middleweights were Bob Fitzsimmons, Stanley Ketchel, Tommy Ryan, and perhaps the original Jack Dempsey, the Nonpareil.

There were a handful of middleweight titleholders before the days of Mike Gibbons, and dozens since. Some of them were good and some mediocre, but few could have carried Mike's gym bag. Why, then, wasn't Gibbons ever a world champion?

Old Jimmy Garrity answered it this way: "He never had

(Continued on page 58)

Summary

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Riddick Bowe KO 1 Michael Dokes
(Retains WBA-IBF Titles)
Jesse Ferguson W 10 Ray Mercer
Alex Garcia KO 5 Mike Williams
Orlin Norris KO 2 Troy Jefferson
Alex Stewart KO 7 Wimpy Halstead
Tony Tubbs W 10 Alexandre Zolkin
Oliver McCall KO 2 Mike Dixon
Herbie Hide KO 3 Juan Antonio Diaz
Bruce Seldon KO 2 Alexander Popov
Greg Page KO 3 Dan Murphy
Dave Dixon W Disq. 1 Elvin Evans
Levi Billups W 10 Nathaniel Fitch
Glenn McCrory KO 2 Ric Lainhart
Poncho Carter KO 7 Pinklon Thomas
Carlos DeLeon W 10 Ken Bentley
Mark Wills W 10 Jerry Jones
Bobby Crabtree KO 1 Dan Lowe
Eric Curry W 10 Rocky Pepeli
Frankie Swindell KO 1 Bobby Jones
Melton Bowen KO 3 Dave Jaco
Larry Donald KO 2 Bruce Johnson

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Norbert Ekassi KO 6 Jean Chanet

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Adolpho Washington W 10 Drake Thadzi
Eric Nicoletta W 10 Andrew Maynard
Ernie Magdaleno D 10 Lupe Aquino
Art Jimmerson W 10 Larry Prather

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

James Toney KO 9 Iran Barkley
(Wins IBF Title)
Michael Nunn W 12 Victor Cordoba
(Retains IBF Title)
Tim Littles W 12 Lenzie Morgan
Mauro Galvano W 8 Melvin Wynn
James Cook W 8 Carlos Christie
Karl Willis W 12 John Collier
Chris Byrd W 6 Gary Smith

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Roy Jones KO 1 Glenn Wolfe
Bernard Hopkins W 12 Gilbert Baptist
Lamar Parks W 10 Ricky Thomas
Thomas Tate W 10 Tyrone Trice
Tyrone Trice W 8 Jake Torrence
Chris Pyatt W 12 Danny Garcia
Frederic Seillier KO 3 Anthony Bryant
Otis Grant W 12 Ron Collins
Randy Williams W 10 Terry Acker
Raul Marquez KO 1 Tyrone Heyward

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Gianfranco Rosi W 12 Gilbert Dele
(Retains IBF Title)
Aaron Davis KO 4 Edwin Curet
Lloyd Honeyghan KO 5 Mickey Hughes
Yung Kil Chung KO 4 Arman Pecar
Craig Trotter W 12 Tommy Small
Donald Wilford W 12 Javier Mendoza

WELTERWEIGHTS

Yori Boy Campas KO 1 Willie Hernandez
Felix Trinidad KO 1 Henry Hughes
Pedro Sanchez Tech. Draw 4 Miguel Santana
Freddie Ladd W 10 Larry Sutton
David Taylor KO 1 James Thompson
John Coward KO 1 Harold Bennett
Ronald Wright W 8 Roland Cummings

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Kostya Tszyu KO 2 Steve Larrimore
Frankie Randall KO 7 Edwin Rosario
Rodney Moore W 10 Livingstone Bramble
Zack Padilla KO 6 Ricky Meyers
Oscar Lopez W 10 Jesse Torres
Jan Bergmann W 10 Eduardo Jacques
Tony McKenzie W 10 Michael Driscoll
Lamar Murphy KO 6 Roosevelt Booth
Vernon Forrest KO 1 Ray Garcia

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Tony Lopez W 12 Dingaan Thobela
(Retains WBA Title)
Oscar De La Hoya KO 4 Curtis Strong
Jean-Baptiste Mendy KO 4 Antonio Renzo
Miguel Julio KO 1 Fidel Noguera
Giovanni Parisi KO 4 Mark Anthony Smith
Todd Foster KO 6 Verdell Smith
Oscar Lopez W 10 Jessie Torres
Jose Castro W 10 Louie Rodriguez

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

John-John Molina KO 8 Francisco Segura
(Retains IBF Title)
Victor Hugo Paz KO 1 Fernando Fuentes
Frankie Avelar W 12 Narciso Valenzuela

Javier Pichardo KO 1 Ratana Singsamang
Wilson Rodriguez KO 9 Franky Dewinter

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Paul Hodkinson KO 4 Ricardo Cepeda
(Retains WBC Title)
Tony Green W 10 Bobby Brewer
Eloy Rojas D 10 Carlos Uribe
Seiji Asakawa KO 4 Al Balaba
Lance Holcomb KO 1 James Dean

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Hiroaki Yokota KO 4 Seiichi Soh

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Victor Rabanales W 12 Dio Andujar
(Retains WBC Title)
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi KO 2 Jose Luis Vegagil
Vincenzo Belcastro W 12 Antonio Picardi
Drew Docherty W 12 Donnie Hood
Johnny Armour KO 1 Ricky Romero
Sergio Reyes W 4 Felizardo Carrasco
Sergio Reyes W 6 Chris Gomez

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Thalerngsak Sithbaobay KO 2 Chong Soo Koo
Hiroki Ioka KO 2 Ronnie Romero
Torsak Pongsupa Tech. Dec. 5 Constancio Dangla
Hiroshi Kawashima KO 5 Tetsuya Matsuo
Arthur Johnson KO 1 Jose Alvarez

FLYWEIGHTS

Phichit Sithbangprachan W 10 Dan Nietes
(Non-Title Bout)
Muangchai Kittikasem KO 3 Sang Woo Park
Seung Koo Lee KO 3 Arman Molina
Rolando Pascua KO 9 Yukinari Oshiro
Eric Griffin KO 4 Francisco Carrasco
Eric Griffin W 6 Ramon Solis

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Shiro Yahiro KO 9 Kenichi Takahashi

STRAWWEIGHTS

Chana Porpaoin W 12 Hideyuki Ohashi
(Wins WBA Title)
Ricardo Lopez KO 9 Kwang Soo Oh
(Retains WBC Title)
Ala Villamor KO 2 Napa Kiatwanchai
Phalan Lukmingkwan KO 3 Joe Constantino
Saman Sorjaturong KO 8 Asawin Sithlukmuang

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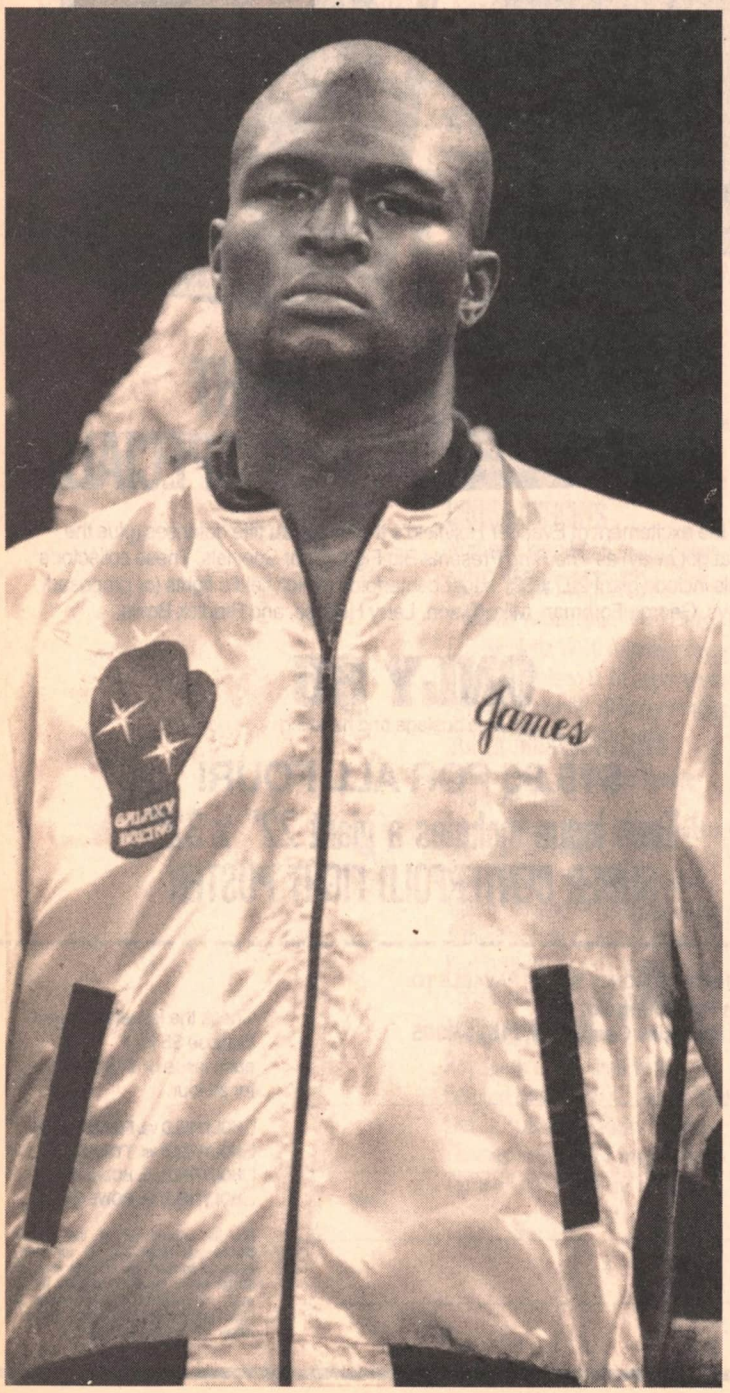
Ringside Reports

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

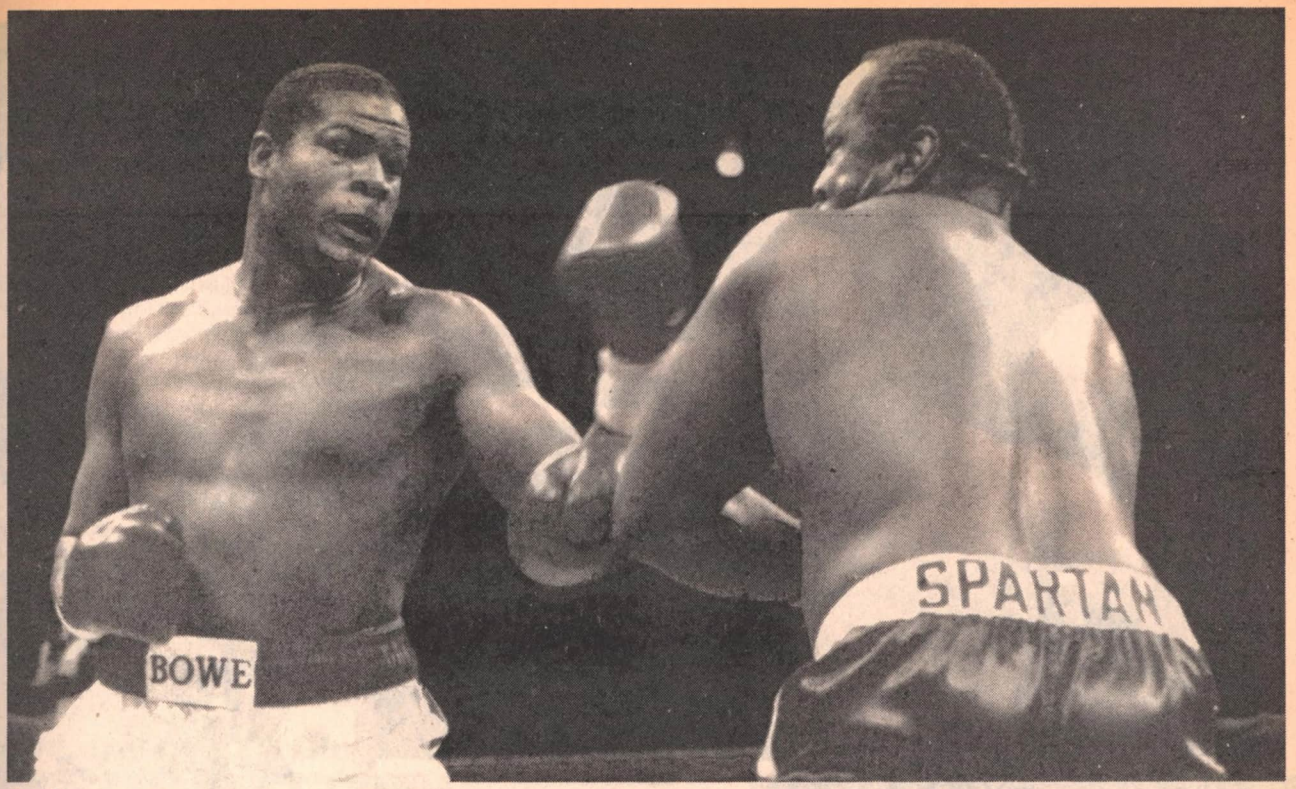


James Toney

Throughout his career, Iran Barkley pressured his opponents into fighting on his terms. Punch with "The Blade" and he outlasted you; box him and he chased you down.

Given that Barkley's confrontational style had frustrated Michael Nunn and led to a pair of victories over Thomas Hearns, it was no surprise that the majority of insiders picked him to retain the IBF super middleweight title over 160-pound king James Toney. But the bettors backed the challenger, which left us wondering just who the experts really are.

Toney was masterful, punishing Barkley from long range and outclassing him on the inside. His ninth-round TKO victory was a sensational debut at super middleweight. No longer will Toney be mentioned when fans argue about the identity of the world's best middleweight. But that's okay; it finally seems time to include him in the pound-for-pound ratings.



Bowe blasted out Dokes

Riddick Bowe KO 1 Michael Dokes

New York, New York—The 22nd world heavyweight title fight at Madison Square Garden drew 16,332 fans and a house-record gate of $1,603,425. After the fight, however, the only number that seemed to matter was 139. That's how many seconds it took for WBA-IBF champion Bowe to crush a ring-worn contender/pretender.

The 34-year-old Dokes, 244, Las Vegas, was paid about $800,000—or $5,755 per second—to serve as a Garden heavybag, just as overmatched challengers Red Burman, Nathan Mann, and Johnny Paycheck had done for Joe Louis more than 50 years before. Has Bowe begun his own "Bum Of The Month Club"? When the fans responded to the end of the bout with chants of "Bull____!" it was difficult to tell whether they were upset with the timing of referee Joe Santarpia's stoppage or the prospect of further Bowe mismatches.

Bowe, 243, Fort Washington, Maryland (but predictably introduced as from Brooklyn), held every conceivable physical advantage over his opponent. He opened with four jabs, all of which snapped back Dokes' head. The challenger kept within range, and halfway through the round Bowe capitalized by striking with a hook and a right. Dokes stumbled into the ropes and remained erect only by grabbing the second strand. Santarpia correctly ruled a knockdown, but oddly failed to complete a mandatory eight-count. When the fighters were waved back together, the only question that remained was whether a hook, cross, or uppercut would be the *coup de grace*.

With about a minute left in the round, Bowe, 33-0 (28), connected with a hook, and his followup right prompted Santarpia to intervene. As Dokes, 50-4-2 (32), approached the referee to protest, he stumbled on rubbery legs.

"Where do you go from here?" he was asked at the postfight press conference.

"Disneyland," he answered.

Sounded like he was auditioning to play Goofy.

The judges were Luis Rivera, Don Ackerman, and Sheila Harmon-Martin, all from the USA.

The bout was televised by HBO.

(2-6-93)

Steve Farhood

Ricardo Lopez KO 9 Kwang Soo Oh

Pohang, South Korea—Surviving a dangerous clash of heads, unbeaten Lopez, 105, proved faster and stronger than former Olympian Oh, 104, South Korea. The Mexican retained the WBC strawweight title for the sixth time by scoring a bloody stoppage at 2:40 of the ninth round at the Pohang Gymnasium.

In the first round, Lopez threw a right and his southpaw opponent answered with a straight left. They unintentionally butted heads, and Oh emerged with blood streaming from a cut high on his forehead. For the remainder of the bout, the challenger was frequently examined by the ringside doctor.

Ambitious, energetic, and fighting with a sense of urgency because of the cut, Oh, 6-1 (3), remained aggressive throughout. However, Lopez averted his charges with slick movement and countered with accurate combinations. The champion rocked Oh in the fourth and proceeded to win each subsequent round by wide margins. In the ninth, it was finally determined that the cut was too severe for Oh to continue.

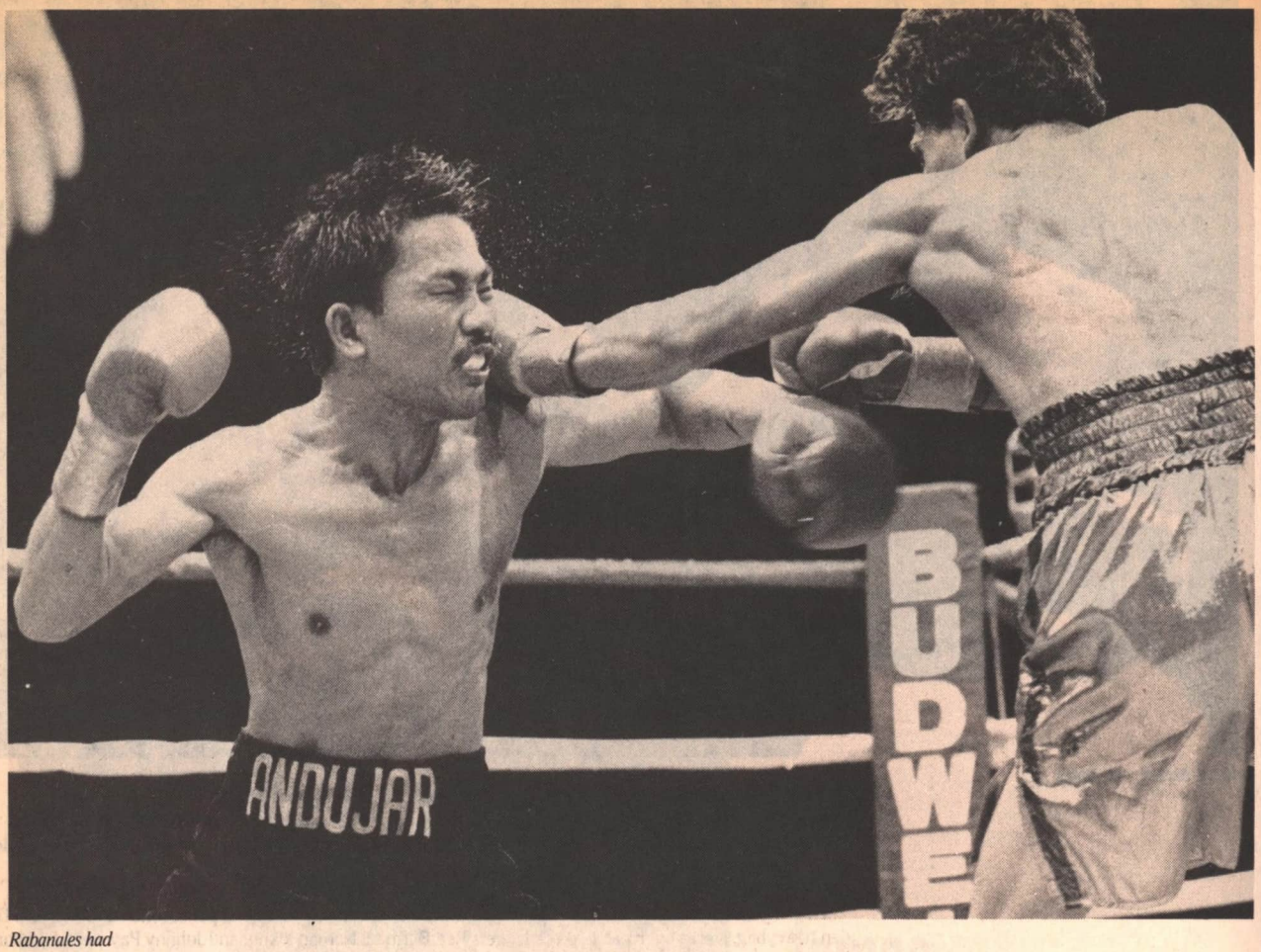
After eight rounds, Lopez, 32-0 (23), led on all three cards. Dalby Shirley and Lou Filippo both scored 79-73, and Terry Smith saw it 79-74. All three judges were from the USA. The referee was Chuck Hassett.

Lopez is hoping for a try at the winner of the March 13 junior flyweight unification fight between champions Humberto "Chiquita" Gonzalez (WBC) and Michael Carbajal (IBF).

Promoter: Punsan Promotions

(1-31-93)

Joe Koizumi



Rabanales had Andujar blinking

Victor Rabanales W 12 Dio Andujar

Inglewood, California—Defending the WBC bantamweight title before 4,377 fans at the Great Western Forum, Rabanales, 118, Chapas, Mexico, overcame cuts over both eyes and scored a unanimous decision over Andujar, 118, Cebu, The Philippines. Scores: Dick Young 117-111, Davey Pearl 118-110, and Henry Elespuru 116-113. All three judges are from the USA. The referee was Rudy Ortega (USA).

Rabanales seemed intent on scoring an early kayo. He opened by launching a vicious body attack, but the ninth-rated Andujar took the champion's best punches, and by the fifth was answering with a steady two-fisted attack of his own. In the second, an unintentional butt opened a cut on Rabanales' right brow, and by the fifth he was bleeding from a cut at the corner of his left eye. Ortega intervened in the fifth for a brief examination. Rabanales bled for the remainder of the bout, but at no time did a stoppage seem imminent.

"The cuts did not bother me," said the Mexican.

The first half of the fight featured a fantastic pace, with the rivals trading punches from bell to bell in the sixth. Rabanales slowed in the seventh, and for the next three rounds, Andujar scored at long range. The champion rebounded in the 10th, and with both bantams clearly fatigued, the Mexican dug deeper to win the last two rounds.

Afterward, Andujar, 39-12-2 (15), complained that he had injured his right hand as early as the second round. He also said that he would have fared better had be boxed more and slugged less.

Rabanales, 34-10-2 (19), but 20-1-1 in his last 22 bouts, gave no indication of whom he'd like to fight next. In the audience, however, was former WBA champion Eddie Cook, who called for a title try. A Rabanales-Cook matchup would be a thriller.

(1-25-93)

David Wood

Chana Porpaoin W 12 Hideyuki Ohashi

Tokyo, Japan—Unbeaten Thai Porpaoin, 105, moved in and out, landed quick combinations, and withstood Ohashi's desperate late-rounds rally to capture the WBA minimumweight title by well-received majority decision.

Scoring: Phil Newman (USA) 118-111, Silvestre Abainza (Philippines) 117-112, and Chul Hee Han (South Korea) 114-114.

The crowd of 9,500 at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium wondered why the favored Ohashi, who was making the first defense of his second 105-pound reign, waited so long to punch. For the first nine rounds, Porpaoin piled up points against his taller foe. Ohashi's only moment came in the fifth, when he landed some solid left hooks. Sensing that the title was slipping away, the Japanese accelerated in the 10th, but Porpaoin, encouraged by former stablemate and world champion Khaosai Galaxy, remained elusive.

The 26-year-old Porpaoin, who had been rated first, advanced to 27-0 (12). Ohashi, 27, dropped to 19-5 (12).

The referee was South Africa's Stanley Christodoulou.

Promoter: Kyukuto Promotions

(2-10-93)

Joe Koizumi

Michael Nunn W 12 Victor Cordoba

Memphis, Tennessee—They have Elvis sightings all the time in these parts. Maybe someone should start looking for Cordoba.

Rematched with Nunn in an attempt to regain the WBA super middleweight title he had lost via controversial decision last September, Cordoba, 168, Belfast, Northern Ireland, via Darien, Panama, boxed as if an impostor. Nowhere to be seen was the 30-year-old southpaw's long jab, his infighting skills, or his big left cross, which had dropped Nunn in Las Vegas. In fact, the challenger barely lasted the distance, losing a hideously one-sided decision by scores of 115-107 (Canada's Guy Jutras), 117-106 (Puerto Rico's Roberto Ramirez), and 120-106 (Spain's Justo Vasquez) at The Pyramid, a new riverfront arena. *The Ring* scored for Nunn by 117-105.

"He hit me in the head, and after that, I couldn't see very well," Cordoba said.

It could be argued that the Panamanian wasn't hit in the head as often as Nunn was hit below the belt. Cordoba landed his first low blow with five seconds remaining in the first round, and with Nunn grimacing and falling to one knee, Mexican referee Ernesto Magana deducted a point. Cordoba was further penalized in the fifth and 11th, and had he chosen to, Magana would have been justified in disqualifying him.

Even without the deductions, Cordoba wouldn't have had a chance. He never really rebounded from the second round, during which Nunn, 168, Davenport, Iowa, rocked him with a hook, and then floored him twice with flurries. (The three-knockdown rule was in effect, but by the round's end, Nunn had punched himself out.)

Though he briefly rallied in the third, Cordoba, 18-5-2 (14), could never catch his foe flush. Boxing flatfooted, the champion, also a southpaw, inched forward, his hands by his sides. Whenever Cordoba punched, Nunn, 39-1 (25), exaggeratedly rolled with the blows. He almost stopped Cordoba in the sixth, and, though needing to rest on his knees after absorbing the occasional low blow, cruised through the late rounds.

It was Nunn's first defense. Only three weeks after his victory, he was scheduled to defend against Dan Morgan in Mexico City.

The bout was promoted by Don King and televised by Showtime.

(1-30-93)

Tony Lopez W 12 Dingaan Thobela

Sacramento, California—If Thobela came to Sacramento as a little-known fighter, albeit a highly ranked and unbeaten one, he left with considerably more respect.

After 12 rugged rounds that saw each fighter score heavily, Lopez, 134¾, Sacramento, retained the WBA lightweight title by close but unanimous decision. It was his first defense, and his second consecutive title fight victory over an undefeated boxer. He won the title by stopping Joey Gamache last October.

Unlike Gamache, Thobela, 134¾, Soweto, South Africa, didn't collapse after holding an early advantage. The "Rose Of Soweto," 28-1-1 (16), gave back as much as he took, leaving many ringsiders at Arco Arena believing that he deserved the decision.

The judges, however, called it for Lopez by scores of 115-113 (Fritz Werner) and 116-114 (Cesar Ramos and Rodolfo Hill). *The Ring* had Lopez in front by 116-114.

After a feel-'em-out first round, Lopez took the second by pushing back the taller challenger with his jab and scoring with a body attack. Thobela won the third with his own jab and a few straight rights. Lopez rebounded in the fourth, and hurt Thobela early in the fifth with an overhand right to the jaw.

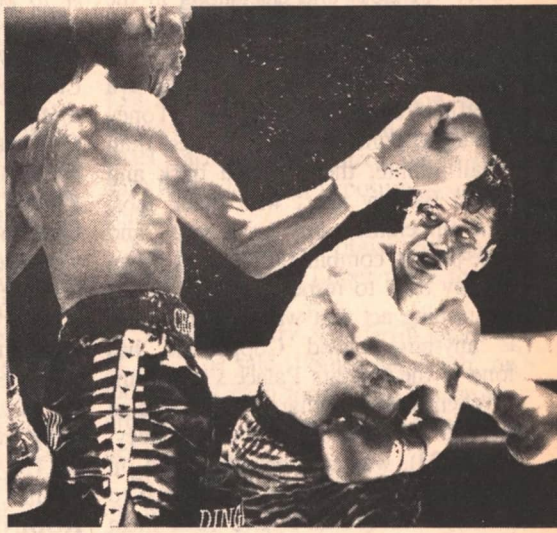
Thobela enjoyed a strong sixth and seventh, after which Lopez showed a swollen left eye and a small cut on his right eyelid. An accidental butt widened the cut, and Lopez, who bled freely the rest of the way, would subsequently take seven stitches.

The final four rounds saw a battered, bleeding Lopez refusing to back away, and an equally gutty Thobela willingly trading. The momentum swayed, and the fighters finished by going toe to toe.

Lopez, 42-3-1 (29), will likely next defend in a rematch vs. Gamache. If he retains the title, look for a third bout with comebacking former junior lightweight champion Brian Mitchell. In other words, Thobela, gallant as he was, may have to wait quite a while for another chance.

(2-12-93)

Steven R. Nicolaisen



Lopez answered yet another gut check

John-John Molina KO 8 Francisco Segura

San Juan, Puerto Rico—In his second time around as IBF junior lightweight champion, Molina, 130, Fajardo, Puerto Rico, has apparently discovered the secret of a long and healthy title reign: Hand-pick your opponents with the utmost of care, and then fight them on your home turf.

Last August, Molina's first challenger, Colombia's Fernando Caicedo, fought as if he were genuinely scared. He lasted four rounds. Challenger number two, "Poncho" Segura, 129, Coachela, California, was brave, but badly overmatched. In fact, he didn't win a single round.

Defending at the Roberto Clemente Coliseum, the 27-year-old Molina, 33-3 (22), capitalized on his advantages in height (three inches), reach (five inches), and speed. He jabbed strongly, connected with powerpunches from ring center, and even outfought the 5'4" challenger during phone booth warfare. All Segura, 20-6 (10), could do was cover up and occasionally answer with short, chopping rights.

Segura, who earned a top-10 rating by upsetting former world champion Louie Espinoza, was hurt for the first time in round two. Early in the fourth, an accidental butt left him with a nasty cut on his scalp, which bled the rest of the way. He rallied briefly in the fourth and fifth, but only because Molina was resting. The California-based Mexican was wobbled by a straight right late in the sixth, and absorbed a steady beating to both the head and body in the seventh, during which he suffered a cut at the corner of his left eye. After Molina knocked out his mouthpiece in the eighth, and then followed with an extended two-handed assault, referee Roberto Ramirez called a mercy halt at the 2:24 mark.

What's next? Molina's mandatory challenger is Bernard Taylor. At age 35, "The B.T. Express" should fit right into the champion's plan.

(2-13-93) ■

Toney-Barkley

(Continued from page 37)

That's 20 times the $1-million purse he earned for beating Barkley. It doesn't take a genius, an accountant, or a starving former middleweight to realize that Toney won't be fighting at 160 again.

The new weight class seems to fit him. He has lost none of his quickness or hand speed, and he seems more durable. Moreover, against Barkley, he showed a new side: His ringmanship was impeccable.

From start to finish, Toney was in command. Despite bitter words between the two leading up to the bout, and a flare-up when the fighters had to be separated at a postfight press conference after Toney beat McCallum, Toney was cool and calculating in the ring. He avoided Barkley's staredown as they awaited the introductions, and when "The Blade" tried to make it a streetfight at the opening bell, Toney exchanged punches briskly for less than a half-minute, then stepped back and picked Barkley apart with quick jabs, right uppercuts, and brisk two- and three-punch combinations. And when Barkley tried to respond, Toney pulled a vanishing act that was as remarkable as anything David Copperfield has done in the Caesars Palace showroom.

When referee Richard Steele signaled the end after the ninth round, Toney, 34-0-2 (23), was comfortably ahead on all three cards. Not that it mattered to Barkley. He couldn't have read them anyway. His left eye was closed, his right cheek was puffy, and he was bleeding from the nose and mouth.

Toney, on the other hand, looked like he had just come from the health club after playing three sets of tennis. A little sweaty, perhaps, but there wasn't a mark on him. Barkley, 30-8 (18), couldn't have hit him with a bucket of rice.

After Steele signaled that the bout was over, Toney climbed the ropes in a neutral corner, waved his fists in the air, and screamed at the crowd, "I told you! I told you! I told you!"

Maybe we all should listen—and search for the other side of Toney. If the Barkley fight is any indication, he makes his anger work for him. The hot head outside the ring is a businessman inside.

Even after all the talk, there was a postfight embrace, initiated by Toney. He actually saluted Barkley on the dais at Caesars Palace.

"I told him he was a great fighter, and I take my hat off to him," Toney said.

With that, he doffed his cap.

And what had Barkley told him?

"Why don't you ask him?" Toney said with the hint of a smile.

"Don't be scared."

Mike O'Hara covers boxing for the Detroit News.■

Riddick Bowe

(Continued from page 45)

porters crane their heads to see The Joker, The Riddler, The Penguin, Egghead, and rap star Hammer, an adviser to boxer Evander Holyfield, standing there like five of the "Seven Blocks Of Granite." Entering a minute later is Catwoman, currently assuming the role of The Penguin's publicist.

CATWOMAN: Let's hurry this up. I have an appointment at the nail salon.

PENGUIN: I have a proposal for you, Dynamic Duo. Take it or leave it. It's winner-take-all. If The Joker wins, he gets the keys to the boxing world, and a trip to the Gotham City Men's Shop, where he gets to walk out with all the belts he wants. If you guys somehow get lucky, you walk away with everything instead. How about it?

BATMAN: Listen here, you tuxedoed tyrant . . .

ROBIN: Holy harrangue! What do you take us for, suckers? I have a counterproposal. Take it or leave it. It's winner-take-all. If Batman wins, he gets the keys to the boxing world, and a trip to the Gotham City Men's Shop, where he gets to walk out with all the belts he wants. If you guys somehow get lucky, you walk away with everything instead. How about it?

PENGUIN: What do you take us for, suckers?

EGGHEAD: Let me mediate this dispute. As I see it, Dynamic Duo, you guys have two choices: Fight The Joker under these terms or meet Evander Holyfield instead. Hammer, show the Caped Crusaders our contract for the Holyfield fight.

ROBIN: *(Handing the contract back to Hammer after reading through it.)* Can't touch this.

EGGHEAD: It's settled then. Batman vs. The Joker. June 28. Tickets on sale Monday.

BATMAN: What the hell, sounds good to me.

JOKER: Might as well go through with it.

CATWOMAN: Not so fast. *(She holds up her paws for the assembled throng to see.)* Aren't you fellas forgetting something?

BATMAN: Oh, no. The rematch claws!

JOKER: Back to the negotiating room.

RIDDLER: For how long?

COMM. GORDON: You tell us.

RIDDLER: That's one riddle I just don't have an answer to.

BATMAN: Holy back-burner, boxing fans!

TO BE CONTINUED . . . HOPEFULLY NOT INDEFINITELY.■

Mexican Champs

(Continued from page 24)

MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ

The low-keyed 22-year-old lightweight, who was born in Ensenada, Baja, California, but has lived in the Mexico City suburb of Roma since he was a youngster, quietly goes about his ring work. But that doesn't mean he's colorless. He has a crowd-pleasing style, and no less than three nicknames, "Angelo," "Mago," and "Tokyo Santa." (The latter was given him by his many fans in Japan, where he fought three times in 1991 and established himself as a world-class contender.)

Many promoters have tried to sign Gonzalez to long-term deals. He's said no, however, to the likes of Bob Arum, Don King, and Dan Duva. Rogelio Robles of Azteca Promotions handles his negotiations, but the fighter and his managers, Carlos Rosales and Carlos' father, Pancho Rosales, have the final word.

"Our plan," he said, "was that in the first year, 1989, we would get me a place as a star in Mexico. In 1990, we would break into the national ratings. In 1991, I would be at the door of a world title. And in 1992, the plan was to be world champion."

Gonzalez flawlessly followed the schedule. He was voted Best Prospect of 1990 by the Federal District Boxing Commission, the most powerful group

in Mexican boxing. He had his first of two U.S. bouts in October 1990, stopping Bobby Brewer in three rounds in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His internationalization continued in 1991 with the three Tokyo bouts and a blowout of Paquito Openo in San Jose, California. And his March 1991 TKO of world-rated Tae Jin Moon firmly entrenched him in everyone's ratings.

The Mexican gained his first championship in March 1992, stopping WBC International lightweight king Ramon Marchena in the fifth round. Two fights later, he beat late substitute Wilfrido Rocha of Colombia to win the WBC title vacated by Pernell Whitaker. Rocha became the third fighter to drop Gonzalez when he surprised him with a left hook in the second round. But Gonzalez recovered, felled Rocha twice, and bloodied him. The fight was stopped after nine rounds, and was later named Mexico's Fight of the Year.

Now that Gonzalez has the title, can he follow Whitaker's example and establish himself as the undisputed 135-pound king?

"I am the world champion; everyone wants to fight with me," he says. "It doesn't matter to me who I face. The important thing is to win and show everyone who is the champion."

In his first defense, Gonzalez decisioned experienced, tough Darryll Tyson in Mexico City's El Toreo bullring. It was only the third time he'd gone the distance. He said he came down with the flu the night before the oft-postponed bout, then had to go to the scale twice to make weight.

More worrisome than the weight may be the injuries that have nagged at Gonzalez in the last year. He was cut on an eyebrow by Jose Mendez in early-'92, and Rocha broke his nose. The problems taking out Tyson showed him that he may depend too much on his power, and that there's room for improvement in his defense.

But he is barely 22. There's plenty of time to improve. And to work on studying English. And to satisfy his passion for flashy cars. And to dream of a future fight with his countryman, the great Julio Cesar Chavez.

"Yes, I'm interested in fighting Julio Cesar, but not until next year," he said. "First I want to better establish myself and gain experience by having four or five defenses."

And you can bet he'll sneak a double peak at the schedule before each one of them.

VICTOR RABANALES

next fight. Still, any dreams of even contending for a world title seemed absurd. In 1988, he completed a one-year course in electronics. Just when a career change seemed imminent . . .

Wins over sizzling prospect and future world title challenger Armando Salazar (June 1988) and Jose Vegagil (April 1989) led to his big opportunity: a berth in a Budweiser-sponsored tournament at the Great Western Forum. Rabanales was a longshot; the draw featured contenders like Paul Gonzales, Fernie Morales, and teenage sensation Javier Leon. But he again defeated Vegagil, scored a technical win over rugged Chilean Cardenio Ulloa, outpointed Cesar Soto, and, in the final, trailed on points before stopping Leon on a cut. The breaks were beginning to even out.

The Forum championship meant $65,000 and a shot at a world title. Only nine weeks after whipping Leon, Rabanales was matched with fleetfooted WBC champion Greg Richardson. Their 12-rounder was tough to score—Richardson dominated early, Rabanales rallied late. It was the champion who emerged with an unpopular split decision win, prompting the fans to shower the ring with beer.

"In 60 years of boxing," said Jerry Nathanson, the former chairman of the California Athletic Commission, "that's the worst thing I ever saw."

"Rabanales chased him out of the ring; he should've gotten the decision," said Forum Boxing publicist John Beyrooty. "The House of Upsets became an upset house that night."

A victory over fringe contender Jose "Pepillo" Valdez kept Rabanales in position, and when Richardson's conqueror, Joichiro Tatsuyoshi, underwent eye surgery, the Mexican was matched at the Forum with Yong Hoon Lee to crown what the WBC termed an "interim" titleholder. Rabanales floored the unbeaten Korean in the second round, and, after suffering a butt-induced cut, captured a ninth-round technical decision.

Mexico's most unlikely of world champions has made four defenses, including a ninth-round stoppage of the comebacking Tatsuyoshi. None of his fights has been easy, and he continues to exhaust his cutman. There are surely better 118-pounders—fellow champions Orlando Canizales (IBF) and Eliecer Julio (WBA) can make the claim, and so can top-rated contender Junior Jones. The awkward Rabanales, however, continues to fight with enough spirit to win.

"He's not a great puncher, he's not a great boxer, and he gets cut every fight" said Beyrooty. "He's just determined to keep the title. He's not in the class of the great Mexican bantamweights, but he deserves to be respected as more than a fluke."

It's really not that difficult to explain Rabanales' remarkable turnaround. A classic case of a fighter improving after winning the world title? Perhaps. But Rabanales won the WBC crown in March 1992, and his streak began in May 1988. (He's since gone 19-1-1.) If records came with explanations, it would become apparent that for the first five years of his career, the bantamweight waived his share of luck.

All Rabanales has been doing since is catching up.

RICARDO LOPEZ

rumored bout vs. the winner of March 13's light flyweight unification battle between Humberto Gonzalez and Michael Carbajal materializes, bigger paydays and additional exposure is sure to come.

But no matter the praise, no matter the rewards ahead, Lopez never forgets his mother.

"I have a very wonderful memory of her," he said. "Since her death, on the 25th of each month my father, my brother, and I go to mass to remember her."

Even on his birthday, July 25. Even on the biggest day of his pro career, October 25, 1990, when Lopez stopped Hideyuki Ohashi in five rounds to take away the WBC title.

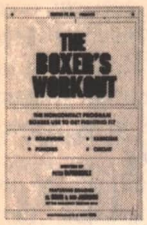
That trip to Japan also claimed another piece of Lopez' heart. Hernandez stayed in Mexico, too ill to make the journey. When Cuyo turned 82 on November 2, he called Lopez' title his best birthday present. On November 20, he died.

"Ricardo is a natural boxer," Hernandez once said. "You don't have to teach him much; he already seems to know it. He was in my gym since he was a tiny creature."

Lopez often got into fights as a child. At age five, he broke another boy's nose. At seven, to harness his energy, his father sent him to Banos Avenida gym, near his home in Tacubaya, a Mexico City barrio.

(Continued on page 56)

"The total effect is a
★ KNOCKOUT." ★
Publisher's Weekly



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Mexican Champs

(Continued from page 55)

He was eight when he had his first gym fight under Hernandez. That began a perfect 40-fight amateur career. And he hasn't lost as a pro, either. He won the WBC Continental-Americas strawweight title over Ray Hernandez in November 1989, and defended it once, in his only bout in the U.S., a March 1990 stoppage of Jorge Rivera in Dallas.

World title challengers Kimio Hirano, Kyung Yung Lee, Pretty Boy Lucas, Singprasert Kittikasem, Rocky Lim, and Kwang Soo Oh have failed to derail him. Despite frequent pain in his knuckles, especially his right hand, he continues to steamroll all opposition. His nickname is "Finito" (the finisher), and he's scored kayos in five of his seven title fight. Who says the little guys can't punch?

Lopez has proven to be just as tough outside the ring. Enrique Hernandez said Lopez was contracted to fight for him after the death of his father, Cuyo. Lopez said he had only signed a blank contract that Enrique later improperly filled in. The courts of Mexico have twice ruled in the fighter's favor.

In 1990, the Federal District Boxing Commission, which oversees fights in Mexico's capital and sanctions national title bouts, wanted to apply a 20 percent tax on fighters' purses toward a retirement fund. Lopez fought the move, saying, "Already we have heavy expenses, with the 30 percent we give to managers and the social security tax, and now they want us to bleed more. Each fighter is responsible for his money. He should manage it, not give it to them to direct for him."

In 1992, Lopez put on an exhibition tour in Mexico City-area youth camps, reformatories, and prisons. His goal was to speak out against drugs and inspire the youngsters to make something of their lives.

"My mother taught me to help people in one way or another," Lopez explained at the time. "The only way I know how to do it is through my boxing. If in some way my presence in these reformatories is able to help someone, I'm ready to make it happen."

Mama would be very, very proud.

JULIO BORBOA

co-manager Francisco Espinosa.

Almost from the start, Borboa dominated. Quiroga's aggressiveness suited him, and the challenger landed an unusually high percentage of his punches, especially with his left hand. By the middle rounds, Quiroga was cut on both eyelids, and by the 10th, his cornermen wanted to stop the fight. The champion talked them into another round or two. With 30 seconds remaining in the 12th and final round, however, he informed referee Robert Gonzalez, "That's it; I can't see anymore."

The fans showered the ring with debris—Espinosa took a punch to the ear and a chair to the leg—and a beer-soaked Borboa had to delay his celebration until arriving safely in his dressing room.

"I wanted to go for [the knockout] at the end," he said. "I wanted to finish him. I always had the faith that I would win. You're never sure how things will turn out, but I always had confidence."

Borboa's zig-zag road to the title would have shattered the confidence of most fighters. One of 12 children, he grew up playing soccer and basketball. His late start in boxing didn't initially seem much of a handicap—he won his first dozen pro bouts. But as soon as he began accepting bouts without regard to weight, he became a win one-lose one fighter. In less than two years, his record dropped from 12-0 to 15-4.

"One week after he came to the gym looking for a manager," said co-handler Abdulio Munoz, "he took an eight-round fight in Phoenix at *126 pounds*. [Borboa lost on points to Joel Diaz.] He was also fighting at bantamweight, which was too heavy."

Munoz, Espinosa, and veteran booking agent Bob Mittleman dropped Borboa to flyweight for the Kotey fight, and then decided junior bantamweight was where he belonged. The timing was perfect: Just as Quiroga was beginning to seek an opponent for a voluntary defense, the IBF entered Borboa at number eight. Even after the Kotey fight, the champion's camp deemed the Mexican safe. One beating later, Quiroga's handlers are denying that their fighter is shot, and Borboa is Sonora's newest celebrity.

"Now I can go home to my family with the championship," he said. "I'm satisfied I have accomplished my dream." ■

Ray Mercer

(Continued from page 31)

Bad enough that Mercer lost to Ferguson, who had lost nine of 28 fights, and four of his last five. But he also lost a world title shot at Bowe, the WBA/IBF heavyweight champion. Mercer had been expected to earn a purse of at least $1.5-million.

"What I have to say will probably cost me my friendship with Ray," said WBA cruiserweight champion Bobby Czyz, who has trained alongside Mercer. "But you can't make chicken salad out of chicken s____. What he did in his fight with Ferguson was a terrible shame, a disgrace. He can blame it on his back. With Ray, it's always something. But he gave the worst performance I've ever seen from a top-10 fighter who was just one fight away from the title."

From round six on, Ferguson muscled Mercer around the ring and slammed him with hooks and uppercuts. Mercer's response? An ineffective jab and a pawing right hand. Just before round 10, Ferguson heard ringsiders cheering his name for the first time in years. When he triumphed by unanimous scores of 96-94, 99-91, and 97-94, the winner dropped to his knees and offered a prayer of thanks.

That Mercer isn't much of a technician is hardly news. He is not a good defensive fighter, he is not fast, and his one-punch power is overrated. Other than a great chin, resiliency, and a large heart, he has shown little in the way of developed talent. That may be due in part to the fact that he was introduced to the sport in his mid-20s and turned pro at 27.

Today, the 31-year-old heavyweight is past his prime. Still, one would have thought that he had retained sufficient talent to beat the likes of Ferguson. But Mercer trained little—he scaled a career-high 238¾—and looked awful.

According to Czyz, Mercer often dogged it in camp, especially when it came to his daily run.

"Ray Mercer was never disciplined," Czyz said. "I knew he didn't go out and run as he was suppossed to, but I didn't want to tell on him. It wasn't my place to. And anyway, he's a grown man. He should look out for himself."

Johnson disputes Czyz' charge, saying that Mercer always gave his best effort before a fight.

Then how come he weighed so much?

Johnson said injuries beset Mercer and cut down on the number of rounds he sparred and miles he ran.

"In the past, Ray's gotten a lot of bad press on this injury stuff," said Johnson, who resigned the week after the Ferguson bout. "For this fight, he not only had a back muscle pull, he also had a sprained ankle, a pulled right hamstring, and a shoulder injury. So we lost a lot of training time. That's why his weight was up and his timing was off."

Johnson acknowledged that it is what Mercer does during his time off between fights that hurts him most. The trainer said he pleaded with his fighter to stay in shape year-round, but Mercer preferred the life of a party-goer.

Might Mercer have been riding the momentum of his 1988 Olympic victory? In reviewing Mercer's career, it is amazing just how quickly his stock plummeted after he bombarded Tommy Morrison in October 1991. In fact, Mercer's fall can partly be traced to what happened the morning after his spectacular kayo of Morrison. That's when Dell fired then-manager Marc Roberts for what he felt was overspending. It was a move that jolted the fighter.

"Beating Tommy Morrison was the biggest victory of my life, but I didn't get to enjoy it," Mercer told *The Star-Ledger* of Newark, New Jersey. "If Marc had still been my manager, I'd have been in California the next day on *The Arsenio Hall Show*. We don't have the connections and the know-how that Marc has, and it hurts us."

It was Roberts' marketing savvy that helped guide Mercer into the top 10. But along the way he ran short of money. To raise capital, he sold shares of The Triple Threat organization (Mercer's stablemates are junior welterweight contender Charles Murray and IBF cruiserweight champion Al Cole) he had helped found, but lost control to Dell, a Maryland securities investor and the company's biggest investor.

Dell's first error turned out to be matching his fighter with the cagey Holmes. Mercer, a 4-1 favorite, turned out to be no match for the former champion, and before you could say has-been, he found himself stuck amid the likes of Tim Witherspoon, Alex Stewart, Bruce Seldon, and Tony

(Continued on page 58)

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Ray Mercer

(Continued from page 57)

Tucker.

It didn't surprise Roberts that Mercer lost to Holmes. He was sure his former fighter would not train properly.

"He saw it as an easy fight against an old man," said Roberts, who would have preferred to see Mercer fight Michael Moorer. "Against Michael Moorer, he would have trained his butt off. And Moorer was there for the taking. At the time, he was just moving from cruiserweight to heavyweight and wasn't used to carrying 50 extra pounds. That was the time to strike. But it didn't happen."

According to both Czyz and Roberts, motivation has always been Mercer's biggest problem.

"Ray is a fighter of limited skills," said Czyz. "But he also is the laziest fighter when it comes to training. He has no motivation."

It's one thing to say Mercer isn't much of a fighter, but quite another to question his motivation. After all, wasn't this the Army sergeant who went on 12-mile hikes while packing an M-60 rifle on his shoulder?

"Ray may have been 28, but he needed motivation and direction pounded into him," said Roberts, who lived with Mercer for the first 18 months of the heavyweight's career. "I was there for him. He always needs someone to push him."

It's a lot easier for a heavyweight to goof off. He doesn't have to make a specific weight, and as long as he has a good punch and a solid chin, he can get away with looking bad against inferior opponents. But the day comes when such an approach catches up with a fighter. And costs him.

As to his future, who's to say that Mercer's career is over? This is boxing, after all, and anything can happen. But Mercer is not a former world heavyweight champion like George Foreman or Larry Holmes, fighters who have been able to resurrect their careers and keep going well into their 40s. At best, Mercer will likely remain a lower echelon top-10 fighter. But he doesn't figure to make much money unless a top contender views him as an easy mark and Mercer beats him.

It can happen. Just ask Jesse Ferguson. ■

Mike Gibbons

(Continued from page 47)

more than two chances at the championship—both times when it was up for grabs with no real champ on the throne—and both times he wasn't aggressive enough to go after it. The first time, a half-dozen other good middleweights claimed the title, and Mike was definitely the best of the lot. After that, he never got a chance to beat a recognized titleholder."

That's part of the answer, but not all of it.

When Gibbons' record is considered, the question becomes even more obvious. In a career that extended from 1908 to 1922, Gibbons had 132 bouts. He won all but three, and the last two losses didn't really count. Tommy Robson got him on an off-night late in 1921, and Mike O'Dowd, by then an ex-champion, ended Mike's career in a 10-rounder when the St. Paul battler was 34. In the dozen years prior to that, starting with his 1910 loss to Jimmy Clabby, Gibbons fought 100 fights without a single loss. It was during this period that the middleweight division was the toughest in its long and honorable history. Besides the St. Paul fighters and Clabby, there were such as England's great Kid Lewis, Willie Lewis, Jeff Smith, Eddie McGoorty, Young Ahern, Bob McAllister, Leo Houck, Soldier Bartfield, Packy McFarland, Jack Dillon, Harry Greb, George Chip, Frank Mantell, and K.O. Brennan.

Mike Gibbons beat them all.

Brother Tommy probably described Mike's ring performances best of all, and he was no writer: "If you wished to see grand opera in the ring, my brother Mike gave it to you."

***

They called Mike Gibbons the "St. Paul Phantom" because of his smooth, gliding motion and near-perfect footwork. Old Garrity put it this way: "He always looked as though he was wearing roller skates. Even at ringside you weren't aware that he was moving his feet; he kind of glided around like he was on casters. It was downright eerie."

Gibbons family friend George Barton, one of the best referees of the Golden Age of boxing and a longtime writer for the *Minneapolis Tribune*, described Mike thusly: "One had to see Mike in action to fully appreciate his skill and understand why he was called the Phantom. He was the personification of perfection in boxing and punching technique, graceful motion, and ring generalship."

Gene Tunney admitted that he learned more about boxing by watching Gibbons in the gym than from any other source.

Gibbons had many great fights in his time, but the one old-timers best remember is his November 1916 battle with Jack Dillon in St. Paul. They called Dillon the "Giant Killer" because, though only a middleweight, he made a habit of knocking over light heavyweights and even heavyweights. For a time, Dillon, who stood only 5'7" and weighed about 158 pounds, was recognized as light heavyweight champion.

Dillon could take any man out with either hand, whereas Gibbons was not especially famed as a knockout artist. He was more inclined to wear out his foe with continued salvos until finally the exhausted opponent simply fell down. He scored only 39 knockouts in 132 fights.

Gibbons' friends were very much afraid for him on that winter's night in 1916. They figured that if the fight went the full 10 rounds he'd win. But they suspected it might not go the distance. As it turned out, it did. And for 10 rounds Gibbons gave Dillon the boxing lesson of his life. He often hit Jack nine or 10 times without taking one in return. He took complete charge in the first round, and Dillon never won a single stanza. It was a massacre. It was also Gibbons at his incredible best.

The fight with Packy McFarland wasn't. That fight is often cited as the best example of what happens when two superb boxers get together in the same ring. Nothing! And that's how it was in September 1915, when Gibbons was in his prime, or maybe a shade beyond, and the world's two cleverest fighters finally got together in a match that was demanded by the public. Both men had carved a swath through their division, and it was only proper that they should meet for the unofficial championship of the world.

The fight had all the glamour of a world title match, with a host of stars and luminaries from all walks of life to be found ringside at the Brighton Beach arena. Present were such contenders for attention as Richard Harding Davis, the greatest of war correspondents; Irvin S. Cobb, the noted humorist; Dr. F.B. Roller, the famed

wrestler; Ty Cobb, the baseball player; Tex Rickard, the promoter's promoter; Eddie Foy, the comedian; and Wilson Mizner, the fight manager.

Here is the way the *Police Gazette*, then the weekly bible of boxing, described the contest: "It was an incomparable exhibition of boxing skill, but by no stretch of the imagination could it be called a fight. They were expected to fight hard for the $32,500, which they split between them; the fans who paid $58,000 to see a fight were entitled to one. During the long weeks preceding the affair we had been led to expect one. Packy kept insisting that he would knock Mike out, and Gibbons promised McFarland everything short of murder.

"Everybody expected, but everybody was disappointed."

Tad Dorgan, the noted writer-cartoonist, described the fight in part with these cynical words: "Joe Humphries entered the ring and pulled a gun. *Bang! Bang!* There was a hush. The fight began. It was the same old stuff. Mike was the better hitter and a better boxer and a better fighter. But he wasn't doing much. He let Packy hold his arms in clinches. Three or four people hissed. McFarland looked as though he wanted to kill Mike, then slapped him right on the face."

It was Gibbons' reluctance to make a fight that caused it to be such an odorous affair. Some writers gave the fight to Packy, some to Mike. Since this was the era of the No-Decision fights, a horrible era that lasted through most of the time that Gibbons fought, no official decision could be rendered. Individual newspaper opinions were far from reliable. In big fights, though, a consensus of newspaper writers' opinions could be counted on to be pretty accurate.

Their opinion of Mike Gibbons' ring aggressiveness was also accurate. "There just wasn't enough of it," they moaned, "otherwise Gibbons would have been named champion as early as 1912, when he fought Eddie McGoorty."

At that time Gibbons had been in the ring four years and was 24 years old. He had fought 54 times and lost once. He was ready to become middleweight champion of the world.

"He was ready a lot longer than that," said Garrity, the professional fight fan. "Seems to me like he was ready 10 years earlier!" And then he told about the Gibbons kids in St. Paul, and how they learned to box at the YMCA.

"I remember one time," he said, "just after the turn of the century, Mike was chatting in the locker room with some of the other kids, when suddenly little Tommy ran in. His nose was bloody and he was trying not to cry. He must have been about 10 at the time, and that would make Mike 14 or so. Tommy told his brother that some big kids upstairs had beaten him up because he was in their way.

"With the rest of the gang following, Mike went upstairs. He found two older fellows causing trouble for the smaller kids. Well, Mike told the others to keep out of it, then waded in. In no time he had the two bullies stretched out flat. In doing it, Mike showed some of the catlike skill that was to earn him his Phantom title. Even then he was a pleasure to watch. After beating up the two wise guys, he went back down to the gym and studied more boxing tricks."

The man who taught him the tricks was George Barton. At that time, Barton was a fighter; later he became a famous referee, and after writing for the *Minneapolis Tribune* for almost half a century, he wound up as president of the National Boxing Association. In 1953, Barton was recalling the old days. One of the things of which he was very proud was the fact that he had taught Mike Gibbons how to box.

He taught him so well that by 1908, at 20, Mike was ready to turn pro. He did so with a three-round knockout of Ray Moore. Thereafter, for two straight years he built a reputation as a boxer-puncher who could do anything in the ring and do it better than anyone else. It took the likes of a fine fighter like Jimmy Clabby to beat him, with that loss coming when Mike was known outside the Midwest only by repute. Up to then, all but two of his fights had been held in the Twin Cities. It took him another year-and-a-half after the Clabby defeat to reach New York. By then he was considered one of the best of the young middleweights.

In 1953, Billy Grupp, a Harlem fixture who started out as a fighter and wound up as a gym proprietor, told columnist Frank Graham, "My first gym was made when I got Mike Gibbons to leave New Polo Gymnasium and train with me, not long after he first came to New York."

But not even the magic of Gibbons could help the muddled condition of the middleweight division as the second decade of the 20th century began. It shaped up badly. Ketchel, the champion, had been killed in 1910. That left the crown resting on a cloud, with a half-dozen leading middleweights clamoring for it. Billy Papke, from whom Ketchel had won it, claimed the title, and even defended it against Willie Lewis in Paris. Then, in 1911, Cyclone Johnny Thompson outpointed Papke over 20 rounds in Australia. Thompson grew out of the division, whereupon Papke reclaimed the title. Frank Mantell disapproved of this high-handedness, and defeated Papke in a 20-rounder. Among the other top middleweights who either claimed the title or denied the claims of others were Frank Klaus, Clabby, Smith, Dillon, McGoorty—and Mike Gibbons.

Because of their superiority over all others in contention, it was decided that a match between McGoorty and Gibbons would decide the rightful champion. McGoorty challenged Mike outright with a telegram: "Will box you, split purse, winner undisputed champion."

Gibbons hedged. He delayed answering until forced into it. His conduct during the fight backs up the previous evidence, and seems to be the final answer to why he never became world champion.

Here is what famed New York columnist Hype Igoe had to say about the McGoorty-Gibbons fight: (Igoe also helped promote the fight, and was understandably bitter.) "The Gibbons-McGoorty party was the most flagrant insult to the intelligence and patience of the American people it has ever been my misfortune to witness."

Gibbons simply refused to fight. Mostly he backpedaled, treating the fans to some of the fanciest stepping ever seen outside the horse show ring. McGoorty struggled to make something of it but could not. The newspapers awarded him the decision if only on effort alone.

The bout erased both fighters from the list of title claimants for some time. Gibbons returned to his hometown of St. Paul. There Igoe cornered him and made him talk. Why, he wanted to know, hadn't Gibbons beaten McGoorty?

"Because you and every other writer said that McGoorty would beat me," he answered, "simply because he was 10 pounds heavier than me. I decided to prove you were wrong, and that he couldn't lay a glove on me. And he didn't. That's all I cared about."

It was a lame excuse. From then on, Igoe wrote that Gibbons was more con-

(Continued on page 61)

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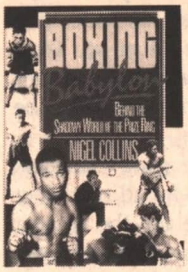

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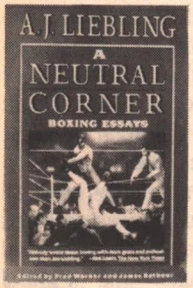

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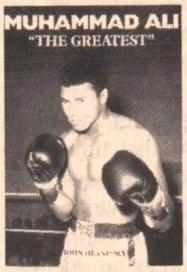

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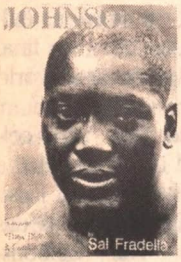

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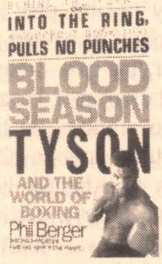

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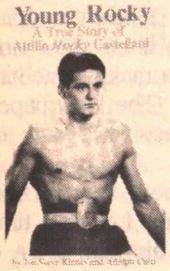

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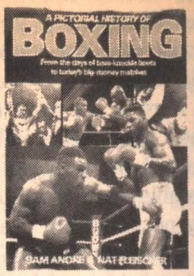

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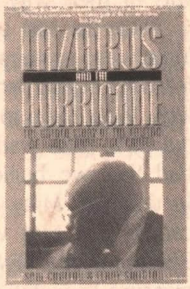

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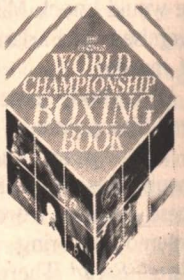

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Mike Gibbons

(Continued from page 59)

cerned with saving his hide than in doing his best for the fight game and the public. A good many others took up this cry, and for right or wrong, this was the final verdict.

He missed by so little. Yet there can be no possible doubt about the verdict. Observers of many of Gibbons' bouts saw the pattern often. They saw him hesitate to go after his man even when he had him licked early in a fight. They saw him, at times, carry his opponent for round after round, endangering his own chances of winning. They saw a decent gentleman who didn't want to hurt anyone.

Yet they also saw Gibbons chase Harry Greb, one of the really great ones, and one of the roughest, right out of the ring. Greb was so confused by the multi-fisted magic of the Phantom that, in returning to his corner after the sixth round, he barked at his manager, Red Mason, "From now on, match me with one guy at a time!"

Yes, Mike could be that kind of fighter. But at key moments, it seemed that he preferred to let opportunity slip through his fingers. And yet that isn't the entire story either. It is almost a cliche to say of a fighter, "He was too good—the champs wouldn't meet him." But in Gibbons' case, it was true. During the few times when a genuine champion was on the throne, he feared Gibbons.

Said old man Garrity, "Take all the world champions of that period—Klaus, Mantell, McCoy—not one would give Mike a title fight. Look it up. And when they fought him non-title, or before or after they got the title, he licked them! He was the uncrowned champion!"

This, too, is a general opinion, and a proper one.

It is a tedious job to dig the complete record of Gibbons from the dusty, yellowed newspaper files. Those No-Decision bouts were brutal unless a fighter got a really strong edge. The fact is that Gibbons won most of his, and he won against the champions. In other words, forget the lack of aggressiveness and the McGoorty and McFarland fights. Think of the 129 fights Gibbons won. And think of the fact that of all the great middleweights of his era, only three licked him.

On August 31, 1956, a 68-year-old man whose telltale features marked him as a fighter, died while playing cards with some friends in St. Paul. The heart attack that claimed Gibbons left his brother, Tommy, to help carry on the family legend. But not for long. The kid brother, who had watched Mike beat up a couple of bullies more than a half-century earlier, had gone on to become one of the best of the light heavys, and, ironically, to also miss winning a title. When, in 1960, death decided that the brothers had been separated long enough, Tom left as peacefully as had Mike.

"They were good boys," said Jimmy Garrity, "and damn good fighters. Especially Mike. Mike can't ever die, you know—he always *was* a Phantom!"

Garrity would always laugh at his little joke. Maybe he didn't realize the truth of his words.

The St. Paul Phantom will never die.■

Kennedy McKinney

(Continued from page 39)

nior featherweight title in December by scoring a one-punch knockout over defending champion Welcome Ncita. But before reaching the top, he dwelled in the gutter.

Today he takes life one day at a time. There are 12-step programs, self-help books, and a lot of prayer. It is all part of McKinney's daily struggle to stay sober. No one in boxing was too surprised when the multitalented 122-pounder won a world title. But there are those who never believed he could win his battle against the crack pipe.

"I set three goals in my life and I've accomplished them," he said. "The first was to win a gold medal. The second was to win a world championship. And the third was to stay clean. I've done that."

It hasn't been easy.

In April 1989, McKinney checked into a drug treatment center for one week. Four days after he was released, he was back on cocaine. An additional 28-day visit still could not save him from himself. Then, after he was arrested in connection with an alleged kidnapping, his Las Vegas-based management team, which included then-UNLV basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian

(Continued on page 62)

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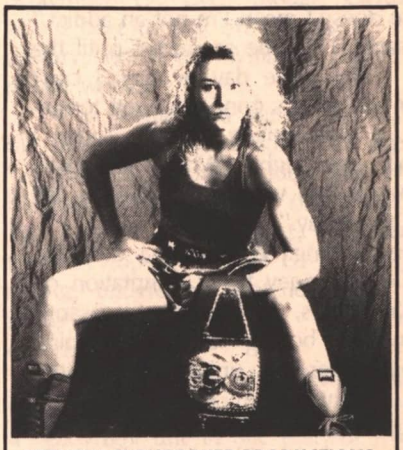
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Kennedy McKinney

(Continued from page 61)

and Las Vegas mayor Ron Lurie, decided to go public with the fighter's drug problems. The kidnap charges were dropped, but the management team decided to drop McKinney, too.

One month later, after winning a four-round split decision over the ordinary Jose Martinez, McKinney tested positive for cocaine. The Nevada State Athletic Commission suspended his license for six months. During that time, he entered the Methodist Outreach Center in Memphis, Tennessee, for a 90-day rehabilitation program. The $10,500 fee was paid by his current manager, Akbar Muhammad, former two-time world champion Donald Curry, and Olympic teammates Riddick Bowe, Ray Mercer, Andrew Maynard, Michael Carbajal, Romallis Ellis, and Todd Foster.

The 27-year-old McKinney has been clean ever since.

It hasn't been easy.

"Just because I don't do crack anymore doesn't mean I'm not an addict," he said. "I will be an addict until the day I die. I live day by day. I can't count on what's gonna happen tomorrow. I keep telling myself, 'Today I won't get high.' When tomorrow comes, I deal with that. I live my life just for today."

He is lying. Well, just a little bit. While McKinney fights temptation on a daily basis, he dreams incessantly about his boxing future. His mind races forward to unified world titles and championship fights in higher weight classes. The dream keeps him going. It helps him stay clean. He knows there are people who don't believe in him.

"Watch the comeback I make," he said. "When they talk about the history of the junior featherweights, Wilfredo Gomez' name will be second behind mine."

A lofty ambition for a man who admits his life was completely out of control only two years ago.

"Anytime you go out and get high the day before a fight, you have to be crazy," said McKinney. "Of course I was out control."

McKinney first began to get high when he returned home from the Olympics. The way he rationalized it, he had worked so hard to win the gold medal that he owed it to himself to party a little bit. That's when his life veered off-course.

"When we came out of Seoul, we were the superstars," said McKinney. "I had this vision that we would be like the next Sugar Ray Leonards. We thought everything would go right. I felt I was the man. I thought I could tell people what to do, or if I didn't want to do anything, I didn't have to do it. I had a big head."

McKinney, who said he got high two or three times a week, was feeding his head with crack.

"You get so close to these young men," said Muhammad, who recruited McKinney at the Olympics and brought him to Top Rank. "I'm involved with his life in every aspect. If something happens to him, it's like something has happened to my family."

There are still questions that remain. Less than a year after his final rehab stay, the fighter disappeared for 10 days and missed a mandatory drug test that was to be issued by the Nevada Commission. That was dismissed as a lack of communication.

Last June, speculation arose that McKinney may have relapsed when he missed several days of training and was subsequently scratched from the Evander Holyfield-Larry Holmes card. The problem that time was a sore shoulder.

"I was never given an indication that Kennedy wanted to do anything but train," said Bruce Blair, a Top Rank trainer who babysat McKinney and unbeaten junior welterweight contender Vince Phillips for six months while the fighters sorted out their respective drug problems. "All I expect to see are good things from Kennedy."

The trio lived in Pahrump, a town 72 miles from Las Vegas with nothing but desert in between. Blair drove them to Vegas each day so they could train with Kenny Adams. Then he drove them home at night.

"I still cherish those six months," said Blair. "We were like a family. They were both very serious. They worked extremely hard."

(Phillips tested positive for marijuana after stopping Julio Flores in January. He is awaiting a hearing with the Nevada Commission.)

Muhammad, who also managed Curry, has been McKinney's savior. He has been vital to rebuilding the man, and not just the fighter. Muhammad grew up on the mean streets of Newark, New Jersey, and back then, the narcotic of choice was heroin.

"I've seen it all my life," said Muhammad. "I've seen situations where the right guy, with the right kind of encouragement, can overcome it. I think it takes a lot of love, and the most important thing is that you have to be honest with each other."

Muhammad's message was always the same. He'd tell McKinney, "You're an asshole, you're an embarrassment to your family, you've destroyed everything you've worked for." Hard words, but Muhammad cared enough to always be there.

It was the kind of tough love McKinney needed. Muhammad would tell McKinney how drugs destroyed world-class fighters like Aaron Pryor. But he also made it a point to talk about the success stories. He told McKinney about John Lucas, the former NBA star who abused drugs. Lucas, who said in a recent interview that he has been sober since March 1986, runs a successful rehab clinic in Houston and is now the head coach of the San Antonio Spurs.

"This is going to be a John Lucas story, not an Aaron Pryor story," said Muhammad. "Now, Kennedy is living his life like an athlete should."

McKinney's first step was to move from Las Vegas back to his hometown of Memphis, removing himself from the fast lane and surrounding himself with family.

"You go to rehab and they tell you about people, places, and things," he said. "If you can stay away from the people you hung out with and the places you used to go and things you used to do, you'll be all right. You have to have faith, too. You have to get on your knees every night and thank the good Lord for keeping you straight and strong."

He has been quite strong. On his way to the title, McKinney knocked out Adrian Arreola, who had gone the distance with Julio Cesar Chavez, and stopped former world champion Paul Banke. According to the people closest to him, he has been straight, too.

"I feel like I know when he's not as righteous as he should be," said Adams, who's trained McKinney in the Army, the Olympics, and now the pros. "The focus has been there."

"I would never think that Kennedy would do drugs again," added Blair. "He has his life in focus. He's on a natural high. Am I surprised that he

won the title? Not at all."

McKinney says that capturing the title has lifted a tremendous burden from his shoulders. He also feels it has redeemed him. But when McKinney challenged Ncita, he almost left Sardinia, Italy, a loser.

It was an extremely fast-paced fight, with McKinney scoring points with his jab and Ncita pressuring the American round after round. McKinney was wobbled at the close of round 10, and the champion seemed determined to finish him in the 11th. Ncita continued the pressure, and McKinney turned his back and voluntarily dropped to one knee.

"He got hit with a right, a left hook, and another right," said Adams. "He was hurt, so he went down to one knee. I tell my fighters, 'Go down, take your count, get your head together, and then get up.' This is something we've talked about."

When McKinney rose, Ncita backed him to the ropes. The champion was swarming and the challenger was countering. Suddenly, McKinney landed a single right hand that flattened Ncita. It was the South African's first loss in 32 fights.

"The referee could have counted to 1,000," said Muhammad. "He wasn't going to get up."

"If I hit you in the right spot, you can forget about it," said McKinney, who is 22-0-1 (14).

That right hand was perhaps the realization of a miracle. It served as a key chapter in what indeed appears to be another John Lucas story.

McKinney has finally recaptured the momentum that he appeared to leave in Seoul. He has his own ideas on how this story will end. He has set his sights on WBC champion Tracy Patterson and WBA titlist Wilfredo Vasquez; the goal is to become the first unified champion in junior featherweight history.

"I labeled Mac a can't-miss from the beginning," said Muhammad. "It was just a matter of getting the other problems behind him. I knew Ncita was the guy at the top of the heap. He was the most prominent of all the junior featherweight champions. I knew licking this guy would make Mac the king of the heap."

Although Top Rank spent as much as $50,000 trying to rehabilitate McKinney, it is promoter Cedric Kushner who will now profit from the fighter's new lifestyle. There was a clause in McKinney's contract that stated he could leave Top Rank if another promoter could provide him with a title shot. When Kushner called, McKinney seized the opportunity. He now has a four-fight agreement with the promoter that will pay him $100,000 per defense.

The split with Top Rank was amicable, and McKinney maintains he has no bitter feelings toward anyone in the organization. That's with the exception of junior featherweight contender Rudy Zavala, against whom McKinney will make defense number one on April 17.

"This is a personal thing," said McKinney. "I once fought for Top Rank. They put this guy ahead of me, and I want to show them that he never belonged."

Don't expect a bruise to his ego to affect McKinney's performance against Zavala. In fact, nothing can get to *this* Kennedy McKinney. He is a man with self-esteem and a world title. He is a man who has visited hell and was able to scratch and claw his way out.

"I never gave up on myself," he said. "A couple of times I almost gave up. Looking back on how hard my mother worked to raise nine kids by herself, I just couldn't. I wanted to, but I couldn't. I guess that was the fighter in me." ■

New Faces

(Continued from page 16)

It won't shock anyone that in regard to training, Williams' role model is former heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield, considered by many to be the best-conditioned fighter ever. And, like Holyfield, Williams is now coached by a professional strength and conditioning coach, Rob Gill, who has increased the fighter's endurance and strength by using cardiovascular equipment, Nautilus, and free weights. "He bench-pressed 205 pounds when he began training here," Cayton says of Williams. "Now he benches over 300."

"I'm so much stronger than I was six months ago," adds Williams, who weighed 195½ for his pro debut in October. "Crazy strong! I used to think that 260 pounds was big. But now I'd feel confident fighting a guy like George Foreman."

ESPN analyst Al Bernstein is among those who are impressed.

"What you see in Jeremy Williams is power," he says. "You can see skills that are special. Kevin Rooney has done a remarkable job with him. Jeremy didn't throw powerpunches well as an amateur. He sure can do it now."

Williams, who has stopped all five of his pro opponents, has kayo power in both hands. It helps that he was born ambidextrous.

"I'm right-handed by nature," he explains, "but I've always had the ability to do things with both hands. If I started doing something left-handed in school, the teachers would try to switch me over to right-handed. But my dad encouraged me to master tasks both ways. In boxing, I'm a lot like Marvin Hagler in that respect. I can change from orthodox to southpaw without missing a beat or sacrificing power. I can jab and hook with both hands comfortably. And I can fight with my feet parallel to an opponent, too."

Team Williams' short-term, albeit farfetched, goal is to break Mike Tyson's record of becoming the youngest undisputed heavyweight champion. For that to happen, Williams would have to fight and beat WBA-IBF champion Bowe *and* WBC king Lennox Lewis by September 19. Even though Cayton would have to pull off the sale of the century, don't tell Williams that the public wouldn't buy it.

"Who would you rather see fight the heavyweight champion?" he asks. "A washed-up, out-of-shape guy like Michael Dokes? A lazy, out-of-shape Ray Mercer? Alex Stewart, who loses to every top-10 fighter? Or a young, strong, undefeated contender who is hungry, and has 13 years of experience?

"Nobody laughs when people say that Oscar De La Holya can fight for a lightweight title in one year, or Kostya Tszyu at junior welterweight. I've seen those guys, and they're both good fighters. I have just as much experience, and I've accomplished just as much as both of those guys. I've been fighting at a world-class level since I was 16. I was a teenager beating grown men."

Aside from being the beneficiary of Cayton's business acumen, Williams, like Tyson, has also spent some valuable free time taking advantage of his co-manager's collection of fight films, the largest in the world. Learning techniques wasn't the only thing he absorbed.

(Continued on page 65)

'60s & '70s ISSUES

When Cassius Clay made his pro debut in 1960, *The Ring* was there. When "The Greatest" fought Joe Frazier for the heavyweight title in 1971, *The Ring* was there. Before Carlos Monzon, Jose Napoles, and Roberto Duran made names for themselves, the readers of *The Ring* were already talking about them. *The Ring* covered all the boxing events and personalities of the '60s and '70s as no other magazine could—and now a limited supply of back issues from those two decades are available for $10 each (including postage and handling).

June 1964: Joey Giardello: "I'm Young Again!" Plus: Cassius Clay, Floyd Patterson, Willie Pastrano, Carlos Ortiz.

July 1964: Will Bobo Olson Win Title? Plus: Polo Grounds, Cassius Clay, Willie Pastrano, Sugar Ramos.

Aug. 1964: Who Is Floyd Robertson? Plus: Max Schmeling, Griffith-Rodriguez, Dick Tiger, Olympic preview, Joey Giardello, Sonny Liston.

Sept. 1964: The Perils Of Patterson! Plus: Cleveland Williams, Laszlo Papp, Jose Stable, Carlos Ortiz.

Feb. 1965: Where Do Our Heavies Stand Now? Plus: James J. Braddock, Emile Griffith, Jose Torres, Willie Pastrano, Oscar Bonavena, Eder Jofre.

April 1965: Clay Clamors For White Hopes. Plus: Jack Dempsey, Jess Willard, Patterson-Chuvalo, Carlos Hernandez, Tony Galento, Joe Louis.

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Nov. 1965: Giardello Title Tenure Over? Plus: History of middleweights, heavyweight situation, Johnny Persol, Luis Rodriguez, Mathis & Frazier's pro debuts.

May 1966: Who Will Tame Dick Tiger? Clay-Terrell preview, James Norris, Emile Griffith, Vicente Saldivar.

Sept. 1966: France Claims Its First Welter Title. Plus: Ernie Terrell, Nino Benvenuti, U.S. vs. Britain.

Jan. 1967: Is Time Running Out On Terrell? Plus: Torres-Tiger preview, long count mystery solved, Carlos Ortiz, Cassius Clay, Zora Folley, Johnny Persol.

March 1967: Why Isn't Clay Fighter Of The Year? Plus: Year-end issue, 2,500 fighters rated, Tiger-Torres, Clay-Terrell, Curtis Cokes.

April 1967: Death Stalks The Tiger. Plus: Cassius Clay, Emile Griffith, Mike Jacobs, Barney Ross, Joe Clark.

May 1967: Cassius Clay: "Louis Clobber Me? He Must Be Joking!" Plus: Frazier-Jones, Floyd Patterson, Carlos Ortiz, Frazier-Mathis preview, Nino Benvenuti.

June 1967: They're Talking Frazier Now!!! Plus: Ali-Folley, Joe Louis, Ismael Laguna, Clay-Ellis?, Joe Gans.

Aug. 1967: Karl Mildenberger: Germany's Second Schmeling? Plus: Nino Benvenuti, Foster-Cotton, Curtis Cokes, Tiger-Torres II, heavyweight analysis.

Dec. 1967: Jack Dempsey Picks Next Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Griffith-Benvenuti II, Joe Frazier, Gans-McGovern controversy, Buster Mathis.

Jan. 1968: Corbett-Dempsey Computer Fight. Plus: Joe Frazier, Jerry Quarry, Jimmy Ellis, Thad Spencer, Vicente Saldivar retires.

Feb. 1968: The Quarry-Spencer Delay—Why? Plus: Bob Foster, Buster Mathis, Rocky Marciano, Jimmy Ellis, Dick Tiger, all-time heavyweight tournament.

April 1968: Spectre Of Clay Haunts Heavy Situation (painting by LeRoy Neiman) Plus: Transcript of Clay trial, Rocky Marciano, Ingemar Johansson, Bob Foster, Jerry Quarry.

May 1968: Quarry Revives White Hope Cry!!! Plus: Frazier-Mathis, Jimmy Ellis, Joe Frazier, Dick Tiger, Bob Foster, Nino Benvenuti.

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Nov. 1969: How Much Has Aging Liston Left? Plus: Ruben Olivares, Tommy Walsh, Battling Levinsky, referees.

May 1975: Ron Lyle: "I Only Lost A Battle, Not The War." Plus: Tiger Flowers, George Foreman, Lyle-Young, Frazier-Ellis, Quarry-Johnson, Johnny Baldwin, Tommy Rose.

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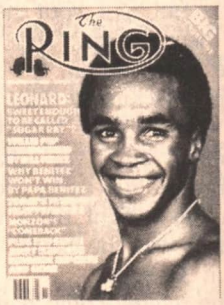
July 1979: Foreman Exclusive: Preach Or Punch? Plus: Mike Weaver, Jack Sharkey, Galindez-Rossman II, Franklin-Johnson II, Jorge Lujan, Watt-Pitalua, Chacon-Limon II, Conteh-Burnett, Leonard-Viruet, federal commission?

Sept. 1979: Is Holmes Ali's Successor? Plus: Holmes-Weaver, Duran-Palomino, Lopez-Ayala, Coetzee-Spinks, Pintor-Zarate, Tate-Knoetze, Kim-Guisseppi, Lopez-Ayala, Gomez-Hernandez, German greats, Rocky II.



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Nov. 1979: Leonard: Sweet Enough To Be Called "Sugar Ray"? Plus: Wilfred Benitez, Willie Pep, 10 worst heavyweights, Monzon comback?, Cuevas-Shields, Leonard-Ranzany, Muhammad-Conteh, Hilmer Kenty.

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New Faces

(Continued from page 63)

"I watched the way the greats like Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, and Floyd Patterson conducted themselves in the ring," he says. "They weren't in there to showboat or humiliate guys. They were all business. I don't believe you have to carry on or be a jerk to attract fans. You can get more bees with honey than vinegar."

Unlike Tyson, however, Williams doesn't see Cayton as a condescending manipulator.

"Mr. Cayton is a successful, tough businessman who is very strict and conservative," he says. "When Tyson became the champion, like a lot of champions, he wanted to be the boss. He didn't want to listen to Cayton or Kevin, two guys who will always tell you the truth, even if you don't want to hear it. So I can see how Tyson was enticed by Don King."

In order to attain his goal, Williams has to stay busy. As we went to press, he had three fights scheduled in an 11-day period, and he hopes to have a total of 15 fights by the fall.

"The fact that he's stopping guys early doesn't concern me," says Cayton. "Kevin pushes him hard in the gym. He goes 10 rounds against heavyweights, and pretty soon he'll be going 15. Kevin will teach Jeremy everything he has to learn.

"Just as Mike Tyson was the fighter of the '80s, Jeremy will be the fighter of the '90s."

That's mighty bold talk, even if it does come from the fighter's manager. But in at least one respect, Cayton is right: This blue-chip prospect, who has already accomplished a lot, has the hunger and physical and mental maturity to attain so much more. ■

Paul Hodkinson

(Continued from page 29)

A ruthless Hodkinson had set out to make it a short night's work. He thumped away to the challenger's body, switching impressively to the head with short, powerful hooks from both hands. Cepeda, 125, soaked it all up until a crisp right made him touch down with his gloves in the second round. He rose quickly to take the mandatory count.

The 26-year-old challenger managed to stay upright for the rest of the time it lasted, but absorbed terrific punishment. Cepeda did manage to expose some of Hodkinson's defensive deficiencies when he landed with useful counterpunches to the head, but how do you stop a raging torrent with just a few pebbles?

The champion's manager, Barney Eastwood, who put aside old scores to co-promote the show with Frank Warren and Barry Hearn, said, "Paul proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that he is the best featherweight in the world."

Said Hodkinson, "I felt great shadowboxing in the dressing room, and I knew I was going to sparkle. I knew from watching tapes of Cepeda that he doesn't start well. So I went out fast and he couldn't cope. I was delighted with the performance."

Onlooker Kelley was also impressed. "Hodkinson showed he was a good champion," said the number-one contender, "but he has to fight the best, and I am the best. We're like two strangers who have to meet in a dark alley."

Hoko doesn't see any reason why he shouldn't be the first fighter to put a stain on Kelly's spotless record. "I saw a tape of him beating Troy Dorsey and I wasn't too impressed," he said. "If he stands and trades with me the way he did against Dorsey, that will suit me just fine."

Hoko sees a Madison Square Garden clash with Kelley as the ideal opportunity to show the Americans that he is a genuine champion. It could open the door to further big-money fights, aimed at providing security for himself, wife Joanne, and sons Kevin and Jason.

He might have made big money without leaving England if Londoner Colin McMillan hadn't ruined the script by losing to Ruben Palacio last September. Hoko-McMillan was the matchup the British wanted almost as much as Lennox Lewis-Frank Bruno. It might still happen, but not for a while. McMillan has to have an operation to cure the shoulder injury that caused him to quit against Palacio.

Shifty southpaw McMillan is just the sort of stylist who could give the short-armed Hodkinson lots of trouble. He might not possess the ruggedness to

(Continued on page 68)

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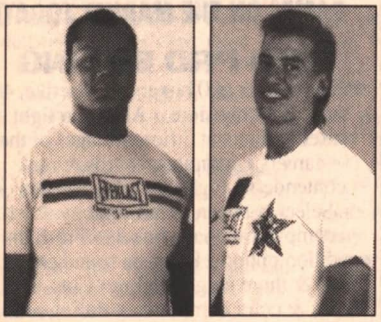

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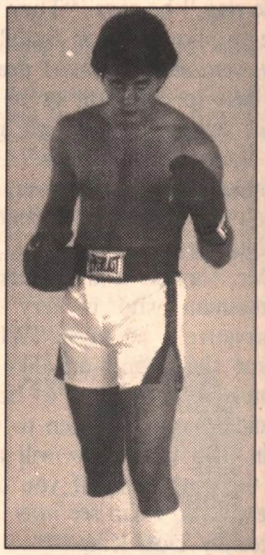

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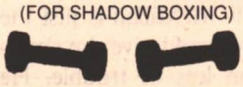

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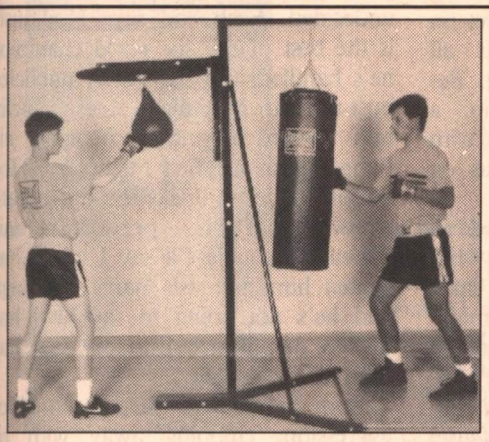

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THE SALVATION ARMY
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Paul Hodkinson

(Continued from page 65)

withstand Hoko's powerpunching up close, but he would figure to outsmart him from a distance. And those raking jabs could have a devastating effect on Hoko's vulnerable eyebrows. It all adds up to an intriguing pairing. Before McMillan's loss to Palacio, a purse of $600,000, split 50-50, with $38,000 extra for the winner, was on the table.

"McMillan would be awkward all right," admitted the WBC titlist, "but only for a few rounds. I would catch him. Twelve rounds is a long time."

Hodkinson is advising the queue of featherweight contenders to be patient—they'll all get their turn. He confidently predicts up to a dozen defenses before he hands back the belt by the time he is 30.

He's been boxing now for 16 years, having joined his local Kirkby amateur club in a lofty ambition to emulate the Liverpool hero of the day, John Conteh. Hoko was a starry-eyed youngster among the Liverpool Stadium crowd that cheered Conteh to a third-round victory over American Len Hutchins in defense of the WBC light heavyweight crown in 1977. For most, such dreams never rise to more than that. For Hodkinson, dreams can come true if you work hard enough at them.

When the time came to turn pro (in 1986), Hoko surprised many by opting to join Eastwood's camp, based in trouble-torn Belfast, Northern Ireland. Eastwood had already guided another featherweight, Barry McGuigan, to the WBA title. McGuigan was one of Hoko's ring idols, and Hodkinson accompanied the Irishman to the USA on a trip, using the occasion to pick up valuable experience by sparring with the likes of then-WBA flyweight champion Hilario Zapata.

He was still an amateur at the time, with his sights set on a Commonwealth Games gold medal. But the amateur authorities took a dim view of his missing squad training sessions and dropped him from the British team. That settled it. He signed up with Eastwood.

The hard-hitting Liverpudlian blitzed his way through the ranks, with only a draw in Panama against Tomas Arguelles (later kayoed in six by Hodkinson in Belfast) to mar a run of quick victories. He picked up the British and European titles on route, and the inevitable question was asked: Would he be as good, or even better, than McGuigan?

With Hoko having made three successful world title defenses (already one more than McGuigan managed) and possibly more to come, the issue is still undecided. Eastwood says Hodkinson is the best of the six world champions he's handled, but his widely publicized bust-up with McGuigan doesn't incline him toward saying too many nice things about his first titleholder. Hodkinson modestly ducks the oft-repeated question, but when pressed, he said, "Well, of course I'll say I could have beaten him, but ask Barry McGuigan and he's not going to say he'd have lost to me, is he? But it would have been a great fight."

Both based their success on all-out aggression, chipping away with rib-crushing hooks, switching swiftly to the head, and keeping up the pressure until the opponent inevitably caved in. Both were diligent trainers and always entered the ring in peak condition. In the January 1993 issue of *The Ring*, Editor-in-Chief Steve Farhood described Hodkinson as "a McGuigan clone without the long reach." Therein may lie the clue to McGuigan having the edge in the imaginary battle of the brawlers; his longer arms might have wreaked a lot of damage before Hoko got into range. McGuigan also had better lateral movement and probably the harder punch.

There was a time when the best of the British featherweights were cautious tacticians who relied mainly on the "good old straight left" and fancy footwork to pile up points on the retreat. From Jim Driscoll and Owen Moran early in the century, to Nel Tarleton in the '30s, and on to Welsh wizard Howard Winstone in the '70s, the emphasis was on defense more than attack. Maybe that explains why, of the old masters, only Winstone, on his fourth attempt, managed to pick up a version of the world title.

It looks like the British have learned the lesson from their American cousins that if you want to be champion of the world, you've got to get in there and battle for it.

"The Americans will like me," said Hoko. "I do it their way."

Patrick Myler is an author and newspaper staff journalist based in Dublin, Ireland. ■

Boxing Collector's Notebook

By Don Scott

"Hey, how much will you give me for a pair of Jack Dempsey's gloves? He wore 'em against Tunney," the old guy wants to know.

"How do you know they're Dempsey's?"

"My uncle Louie's third cousin, Delmont, or Wilhelm, or something, gave 'em to my uncle in about '36, about five years before Louie died, and Louie's second wife gave 'em to me." The old man is beaming now.

"I'm sure they're worth more to you in memory of your late uncle than they would be to me."

"Not really." The gentleman suddenly becomes somber. "Louie was a bum!"

I've had this type of conversation with several folks since I began collecting about 15 years ago. If there is anything one can collect that demands the utmost in caution, it is personal or fight-worn gear. Even more than with autographs, the potential to be really disappointed or, even worse, ripped off, is enormous. But who wouldn't want a robe worn by Rocky Marciano, or a pair of trunks worn by Joe Louis?

The operative word you must learn is provenance. Antique dealers and collectors want to know what establishes the item to be what it is purported to be. What is the origin, or provenance? When you buy such an item, you are buying the item and its provenance, and if either is poor, the chances of you ever reselling it is remote.

Here is a checklist for good provenance:

- Is it in writing and signed?
- Does the signer have first-hand knowledge that the item is what he/she says it is? Testimony of what a relative or friend has told the signer weakens, but does not totally negate, the value of the piece.
- Is there any hard, or even circumstantial, evidence that can corroborate the provenance? The best such corroborative evidence is a photo or a film that at least establishes that the item is the same brand and look as what is being offered. Remember, however, that lots of boxers have fought with Everlast gloves. A photograph helps establish that the item was at least touched by the fighter, and serves as one more piece of evidence.

Remember that the reputation of the dealer is of some consequence, but not much. Good dealers will do their homework and provide copies of the provenance before you buy, along with a written record of what research they have done. Remember my adage: Education and Common Sense.

A collector I know traded for a pair of Ad Wolgast's fight-worn gloves. The only provenance was that they came from a well-respected antique dealer in Cadillac, Michigan, who got them from a local person who said her husband got them from a barbershop where Ad hung his gloves after each fight. The dealer had apparently verified, through press reports from the time, that Wolgast did indeed hang gloves in an old barbershop in Cadillac. They were vintage horsehair-stuffed gloves of the period.

My evaluation: This is weak, but marginally acceptable, provenance. It lowers the value of the gloves, since not all collectors would accept that provenance.

***

Counterpunch: Rumor is that a couple of poster collectors (dealers?) have taken exception to my assertion that boxing posters are not a good investment. Sorry, guys, I didn't mean to single your stuff out. Heck, I should've said all boxing collectibles are not a good investment. On the other hand, anything you can buy cheap enough and sell high enough can be loosely said to be a good investment. The question is, do you believe that boxing collectibles will, over the span of time, appreciate in value at pace with most other investments? I do not. Collecting is a great hobby, however, and a true hobby. If you buy what you like for a reasonable price, you may make a reasonable profit when you sell, many years from now. There are exceptions, but the exceptions cut both ways.

Don Scott is editor and publisher of Boxing Collectors' News. He can be reached through The Ring. ■

Worldwide Ratings

WBC as of January

WBA as of December

IBF as of February

HEAVYWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Riddick Bowe (USA)	-	C	C
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	-	-
Tony Tucker (USA)	1	1	9
Evander Holyfield (USA)	2	2	2
Razor Ruddock (CAN)	3	9	7
George Foreman (USA)	4	3	1
Alex Garcia (USA)	5	4	6
Tommy Morrison (USA)	6	6	5
Alex Stewart (JAM)	7	5	10
Ray Mercer (USA)	8	7	4
Frank Bruno (GB)	9	10	3
Francesco Damiani (ITA)	10	12	-
Michael Dokes (USA)	18	8	11
Frans Botha (SA)	-	-	8

CRUISERWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Anaclet Wamba (FRA)	C	-	-
Bobby Czyz (USA)	-	C	-
Alfred Cole (USA)	-	-	C
Orlin Norris (USA)	1	1	1
Akim Tafer (FRA)	2	2	7
Nate Miller (USA)	3	5	3
Marcelo Figueroa (ARG)	4	3	6
Massimiliano Duran (ITA)	5	-	-
Jeff Lampkin (USA)	6	-	-
Arthur Williams (USA)	7	4	4
Robert Daniels (USA)	8	9	-
Richard Mason (USA)	9	10	-
Norbert Ekassi (CAM)	10	7	8
James Warring (USA)	12	6	5
Kenny Keene (USA)	14	8	-
Uriah Grant (USA)	-	12	2
Jade Scott (USA)	13	-	9
Jason Waller (USA)	23	-	10

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jeff Harding (AUSTRL)	C	-	-
Virgil Hill (USA)	-	C	-
Charles Williams (USA)	-	-	C
Randall Yonker (USA)	1	7	-
David Vedder (USA)	2	-	-
Henry Maske (GER)	3	1	2
Frank Tate (USA)	4	3	4
Crawford Ashley (GB)	5	5	-
Anthony Hembrick (USA)	6	-	3
Guy Waters (AUSTRL)	7	-	-
Wan Sub Lee (KOR)	8	4	-
Eric Nicoletta (FRA)	9	6	6
Andrew Maynard (USA)	10	-	-
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	13	2	12
Thomas Hearns (USA)	-	8	-
Yawe Davis (ITA)	12	9	-
Isaias Lucero (MEX)	-	10	-
Tim Hillie (USA)	-	11	1
Andrea Maggi (ITA)	-	-	5
Adolpho Washington (USA)	-	12	7
Egerton Marcus (CAN)	-	-	8
Darjusz Michalczawski (POL)	-	24	9
Victor Potekhin (CIS)	-	26	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Nigel Benn (GB)	C	-	-
Michael Nunn (USA)	-	C	-
Iran Barkley (USA)	-	-	C
Henry Wharton (GB)	1	7	7
Frank Nicotra (FRA)	2	2	3
Tim Littles (USA)	3	3	2
Darrin Van Horn (USA)	4	5	1
Mauro Galvano (ITA)	5	-	-
Frank Liles (USA)	6	4	8
Tony Thornton (USA)	7	-	4
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	8	6	-
Thulani Malinga (SA)	9	-	-
Victor Cordoba (PAN)	10	1	12
Fidel Castro Smith (GB)	12	8	-
Merqui Sosa (DR)	18	9	10
James Cook (GB)	11	10	-
Steve Little (USA)	16	12	5
Jean Tsidjo (FRA)	-	-	6
Mwehu Beya (ITA)	14	-	9

MIDDLEWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Julian Jackson (VI)	C	-	-
Reggie Johnson (USA)	-	C	-
James Toney (USA)	-	-	C
Sumbu Kalambay (ITA)	1	1	4
Roy Jones (USA)	2	2	2
Lamar Parks (USA)	3	4	5
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	4	3	1
Jorge Castro (ARG)	5	8	-
Mike McCallum (JAM)	6	7	3
Thomas Tate (USA)	7	-	-
Steve Collins (USA)	8	6	-
Frederic Seillier (FRA)	9	-	-
Otis Grant (CAN)	10	11	-
Joe Gatti (USA)	14	5	10
Ki Yun Song (KOR)	-	9	-
Francesco Dell'Aquila (ITA)	11	10	-
Gilbert Baptist (USA)	17	-	6
Glenn Wolfe (USA)	-	-	7
Brett Lally (USA)	13	-	8
Frank Grant (GB)	12	-	9

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Terry Norris (USA)	C	-	-
Julio Cesar Vasquez (ARG)	-	C	-
Gianfranco Rosi (ITA)	-	-	C
Simon Brown (USA)	1	5	-
Aaron Davis (USA)	2	1	8
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	3	4	10
Troy Waters (AUSTRL)	4	-	6
Carl Daniels (USA)	5	9	2
Yung Kil Chung (KOR)	6	3	-
Vincent Pettway (USA)	7	10	1
Jean-Claude Fontana (FRA)	8	-	5
Jorge Vaca (MEX)	9	-	-
Louis Howard (USA)	10	-	-
Vinny Pazienza (USA)	-	2	3
Aquilino Asprilla (PAN)	-	6	-
Vernon Phillips (USA)	-	7	-
Gilbert Dele (FRA)	-	8	4
Lloyd Honeyghan (GB)	19	-	7
Danny Garcia (PR)	-	-	9

WELTERWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
James McGirt (USA)	C	-	-
Crisanto Espana (VEN)	-	C	-
Maurice Blocker (USA)	-	-	C
Santos Cardona (PR)	1	-	-
Yori Boy Campas (MEX)	2	3	2
Vernon Phillips (USA)	3	-	-
Genaro Leon (MEX)	4	4	-
Jong Oh Park (KOR)	5	1	-
Felix Trinidad (PR)	6	-	7
Ludovic Proto (FRA)	7	2	8
Meldrick Taylor (USA)	8	5	6
David Gonzalez (USA)	9	-	-
Glenwood Brown (USA)	10	-	-
Kevin Pompey (USA)	12	6	3
Luis Garcia (VEN)	14	7	1
Pat Barrett (GB)	-	8	12
Moises Rivera (PR)	-	9	-
Rodolfo Aguiular	-	10	-
Stephan Johnson (USA)	11	12	4
Larry Barnes (USA)	13	-	5
Angel Hernandez (SPA)	-	-	9
Buck Smith (USA)	21	11	10

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT	WBC	WBA	IBF
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	C	-	-
Morris East (PHIL)	-	C	-
Pernell Whitaker (USA)	-	-	C
Terrence Alli (USA)	1	2	1
Greg Haugen (USA)	2	-	-
Hector Camacho (PR)	3	-	-
Frankie Randall (USA)	4	-	-
Angel Hernandez (PR)	5	-	8
Charles Murray (USA)	6	-	2
Hector Lopez (USA)	7	8	-
Andy Holligan (GB)	8	12	5
Valery Kayumba (ZAI)	9	3	11
Kostya Tszyu (CIS)	10	-	10

Juan Coggi (ARG)	-	1	-
Edwin Rosario (PR)	23	4	-
Loreto Garza (USA)	17	5	-
Akinobu Hiranaka (JAP)	16	6	-
Alberto Cortes (ARG)	-	7	-
Vince Phillips (USA)	12	9	3
Hiroyuki Yoshino (JAP)	-	10	-
Rafael Pineda (COL)	13	-	4
Rodney Moore (USA)	11	-	6
William Ruiz (COL)	-	-	7
Pedro Padilla (COL)	-	-	9

LIGHTWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Miguel Gonzalez (MEX)	C	-	-
Tony Lopez (USA)	-	C	-
Fred Pendleton (USA)	-	-	C
Rafael Ruelas (USA)	1	4	1
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	2	3	5
Dingaan Thobela (SA)	3	1	7
Leavander Johnson (USA)	4	-	-
Darryll Tyson (USA)	5	8	-
Ramon Marchena (MEX)	6	-	-
Jean Mendy (FRA)	7	6	6
Gussie Olzubek (CIS)	8	2	-
Wilfrido Rocha (COL)	9	-	-
Chad Broussard (USA)	10	11	-
Joey Gamache (USA)	13	5	10
Fabian Tejeda (ARG)	-	7	-
Jorge Paez (MEX)	-	9	8
Miguel Julio (COL)	11	10	2
Eduardo Molina (COL)	25	-	3
Tracy Spann (USA)	15	-	4
Sergei Artemiev (CIS)	14	12	9

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Azumah Nelson (GHA)	C	-	-
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	-	C	-
John-John Molina (PR)	-	-	C
Gabe Ruelas (USA)	1	1	2
Jeff Fenech (AUSTRL)	2	-	-
Regilio Tuur (HOLL)	3	12	9
Calvin Grove (USA)	4	8	-
Bernard Taylor (USA)	5	-	1
Renato Cornett (AUSTRL)	6	6	8
Victor Hugo Paz (ARG)	7	10	-
Jimmy Garcia (COL)	8	-	-
Jacobin Yoma (FRA)	9	11	-
Eugene Speed (USA)	10	-	5
Harold Warren (USA)	-	2	-
Jesus Gutierrez (PAN)	-	3	-
Marcos Guevara (VEN)	24	4	-
Yuji Watanabe (JAP)	-	5	-
Narciso Valenzuela (MEX)	14	7	7
John Brown (USA)	19	9	-
Orlando Marimon (COL)	-	-	3
Wilson Rodriguez (DR)	25	-	4
November Ntshingila (SA)	-	-	6
Coco Ramirez (MEX)	-	-	10

FEATHERWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Paul Hodkinson (GB)	C	-	-
Yung Kyun Park (KOR)	-	C	-
Manuel Medina (MEX)	-	-	C
Kevin Kelley (USA)	1	2	2
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	2	-	-
James Leija (USA)	3	7	4
Tom Johnson (USA)	4	1	1
Jose Ramos (DR)	5	-	-
Jemal Hinton (USA)	6	-	-
Miguel Arrozal (PHIL)	7	-	-
Ricardo Cepeda (USA)	8	-	8
Tony Green (USA)	9	-	5
Ever Beleno (COL)	10	5	11
Eloy Rojas (VEN)	-	3	-
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	15	4	9
Orlando Soto (PAN)	-	6	3
Giovanni Nieves (VEN)	-	8	-
Seiji Asakawa (JAP)	11	9	-
Tae Sik Chun (KOR)	-	10	-
Baby Rojas (COL)	-	-	6
Maurizio Stecca (ITA)	12	-	7
Moises Pedroza (COL)	-	-	10

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Tracy Patterson (USA)	C	-	-
Wilfredo Vasquez (PR)	-	C	-
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	-	-	C
Daniel Zaragoza (MEX)	1	-	-
Jesus Salud (USA)	2	7	1
Julio Gervacio (DR)	3	-	4
Rudy Zavala (USA)	4	-	7
Cesar Soto (MEX)	5	-	6
Jae Won Choi (KOR)	6	2	-
Jose Garcia (DR)	7	-	-
Welcome Ncita (SA)	8	8	3
Jesse Benavides (USA)	9	-	-
Raul Perez (MEX)	10	-	10
Luis Mendoza (COL)	-	1	8
Hiroaki Yokota (JAP)	19	3	-
Yuichi Kasai (JAP)	15	4	-
Ramon Guzman (VEN)	-	5	-
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	-	6	-
Thierry Jacob (FRA)	18	9	-
Arnullo Romero (PAN)	-	10	-
Richard Duran (USA)	23	-	2
Jose Rincones (VEN)	-	-	5
Nurhuda (INDO)	28	-	9

BANTAMWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Victor Rabanales (MEX)	C	-	-
Eliecer Julio (COL)	-	C	-
Orlando Canizales (USA)	-	-	C
Junior Jones (USA)	1	1	1
Chang Kyun Oh (KOR)	2	-	-
Daorung Chuvatana (THAI)	3	2	-
Yasuei Yakushiji (JAP)	4	4	-
Eddie Cook (USA)	5	3	7
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	6	10	12
Gerardo Martinez (USA)	7	-	9
Samuel Duran (PHIL)	8	-	11
Jung Il Byun (KOR)	9	-	-
Dadoy Andujar (PHI)	10	-	-
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	-	5	-
Abraham Torres (VEN)	-	6	5
Nana Konadu (GHA)	-	7	-
Israel Contreras (VEN)	-	8	-
Miguel Lora (COL)	-	9	-
Clarence Adams (USA)	-	-	2
Juvenal Berrio (COL)	-	-	3
Harold Mestre (COL)	27	11	4
Junai Ramayana (INDO)	-	-	6
Luis Rolon (PR)	-	-	8
Javier Leon (MEX)	17	-	10

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Sung Kil Moon (KOR)	C	-	-
Katsuya Onizuka (JAP)	-	C	-
Julio Borboa (MEX)	-	-	C
Joel Luna (MEX)	1	4	1
Greg Richardson (USA)	2	-	-
Thalerngsak Sithbaobay (THAI)	3	1	-
Carlos Salazar (ARG)	4	-	-
Jose Luis Bueno (MEX)	5	-	6
Armando Salazar (MEX)	6	-	-
Josefino Suarez (MEX)	7	7	3
Nana Konadu (GHA)	8	-	-
Hilario Zapata (PAN)	9	-	-
Marco Barrera (MEX)	10	-	-
Hyun Chul Lee (KOR)	18	2	-
Kotaro Hayashi (JAP)	20	3	12
Armando Castro (MEX)	-	5	-
Jung Il Byun (KOR)	-	6	-
David Marchan (VEN))	-	8	-
Ernie Cataluna (PHIL)	-	9	-
Carlos Mercado (COL)	12	10	2
Robert Quiroga (USA)	23	-	4
Vincenzo Belcastro (ITA)	-	-	5
Yun Un Chin (KOR)	-	-	7
Lamhot Simamora (INDO)	-	11	8
Little Guns Pumar (PHIL)	-	-	9
Ole Kiatwonway (THAI)	-	-	10

FLYWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Yuri Arbachakov (CIS)	C	-	-
David Griman (VEN)	-	C	-
Phichit Sithbangprachan (THAI)	-	-	C
Isaias Zamudio (USA)	1	-	1
Alberto Jimenez (MEX)	2	-	-
Muangchai Kittikasem (THAI)	3	-	-
Seung Koo Lee (KOR)	4	8	-
Yong Kang Kim (KOR)	5	5	-
Francisco Tejedor (COL)	6	-	-
Al Kotey (GHA)	7	-	-
Hugo Soto (ARG)	8	-	-
Yun Un Chin (KOR)	9	-	-
Jesus Zuniga (COL)	10	-	-
Alvaro Mercado (COL)	21	1	7
Hiroki Ioka (JAP)	13	2	-
Evangelio Perez (PAN)	-	3	-
Aquiles Guzman (VEN)	-	4	-
Jose Luis Zepeda (MEX)	-	6	2
Hisashi Tokushima (JAP)	23	7	12
Robbie Regan (GB)	15	9	10
Scotty Olson (CAN)	11	10	3
San S. Pleonchit (THAI)	-	11	4
Rodolfo Blanco (COL)	20	-	5
Harold Grey (COL)	-	-	6
Dave McAuley (IRE)	12	-	8
Tongchai Kittikasem (THAI)	-	-	9

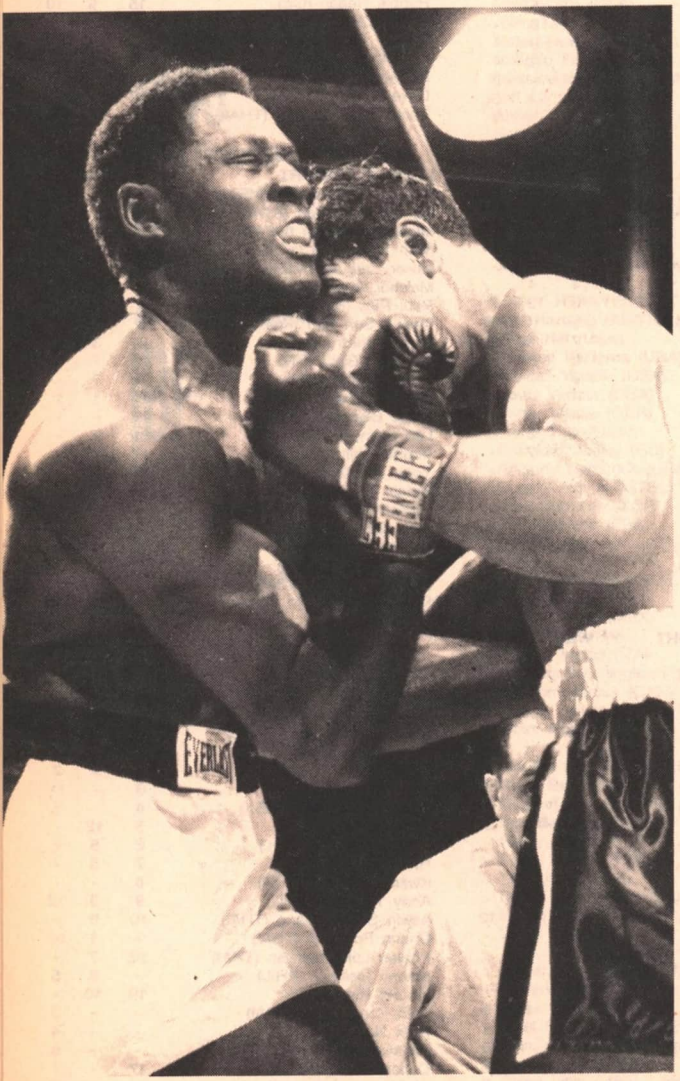
LIGHT FLYWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Humberto Gonzalez (MEX)	C	-	-
Myung Woo Yuh (KOR)	-	C	-
Michael Carbajal (USA)	-	-	C
Nam Hoon Cha (KOR)	1	4	-
Javier Varguez (MEX)	2	-	8
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	3	11	9
Raul Rios (MEX)	4	6	-
Kwang Sun Kim (KOR)	5	8	-
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	6	3	7
Domingo Sosa (DR)	7	-	-
Jesus Chong (MEX)	8	7	-
Juan A. Torres (PAN)	9	1	1
Jorge Blanco (COL)	10	-	-
Leo Gamez (VEN)	21	2	-
Virgilio Chifundo (PAN)	17	5	-
Yong Jin Kim (KOR)	26	9	-
Rafael Torres (DR)	-	10	-
Phalan Lukmingkwan (THAI)	-	-	2
Leon Salazar (PAN)	14	-	3
Azadin Anhar (INDO)	-	-	4
Jesus Zuniga (COL)	-	-	5
Robinson Cuesta (PAN)	-	-	6
Pronchai Sitpapom (THAI)	-	-	10

STRAWWEIGHT	**WBC**	**WBA**	**IBF**
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	C	-	-
Hideyuki Ohashi (JAP)	-	C	-
Ratanapol Vorapin (THAI)	-	-	C
Ala Villamor (PHIL)	1	4	1
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	2	2	2
Rafael Torres (DR)	3	-	11
Jose Luis Zepeda (MEX)	4	-	-
Rocky Lim (JAP)	5	12	-
Kermin Guardia (COL)	6	5	-
Hi Yong Choi (KOR)	7	3	-
Kwang Soo Oh (KOR)	8	-	-
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	9	6	12
Aswin Sithlukmuang (THAI)	10	9	-
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	-	1	-
Phalan Lukmingkwan (THAI)	12	7	-
Manny Melchor (PHIL)	-	8	5
Jin Ho Kim (KOR)	19	10	-
Toto Pongswang (THAI)	-	-	3
Felix Naranjo (COL)	-	-	4
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	-	-	6
Carlos Rodriguez (VEN)	17	-	7
Alfredo Xeque (MEX)	21	-	8
Marcelino Bolivar (VEN)	18	-	9
Nico Thomas (INDO)	-	-	10

RING CLASSIC

COURAGE: CAN A FIGHTER BE YELLOW?

From The Ring, March 1956



Ezzard Charles was thought to be a soft fighter. He lost that label during his gutty, albeit unsuccessful, attempt to regain the heavyweight crown from Rocky Marciano.

By Lester Bromberg

When any fighter—champion or prelim boy—fails to give some spectators 180 seconds of action in a given round, he is labeled "chicken." Most of the time it is neither fair nor accurate . . . remember, few, if any, sideline critics ever have stepped into a ring, and until they do, they don't have the right to doubt a fighter. It is common knowledge that no coward puts on the gloves.

Certain authorities advance the opinion that bravery, in war, act of God, or professional boxing, is a crazy, mixed-up thing. They say it is the result of fear, desperation, or what have you. It is their theory that any of us fight viciously if backed into a corner.

At the same time, it is fight game history that the gamest guys are not the most successful. Their raw courage frequently is chewed up running into stone walls. Any old-timer will tell you that if he had his choice of fighters to manage, he would select a strong, smart fellow "with enough mutt in him not to be foolishly brave."

Where is the dividing line? Can you spot it in a fighter coming up?

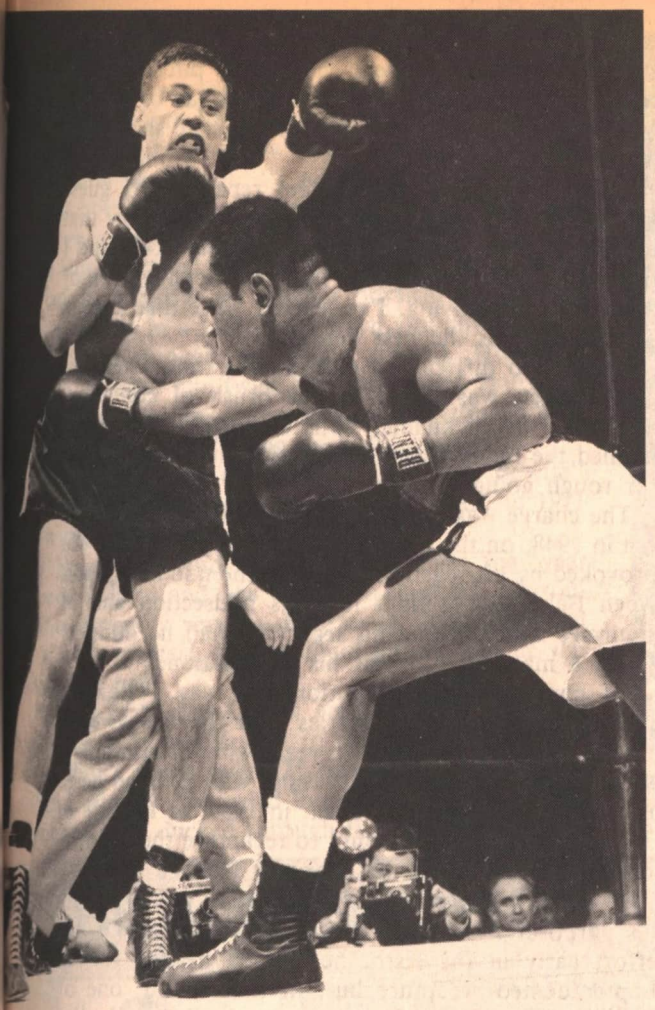
"I've been fooled so many times that I quit calling any fighter a geezer years and years ago," volunteered Charley Rose, cheery little manager who has been around since the old Broadway Athletic Club, which flourished in New York at the turn of the century.

Rose's classic story has to do with Jim Jeffries.

In the summer of 1898, Jeff, then fresh out of San Francisco, signed for two 10-round fights on the same night in New York—Bob Armstrong and Steve O'Donnell, in that order.

"Jeff licked Armstrong pretty good," Charley related, "but he refused to go on with O'Donnell, claiming he'd hurt his thumb.

"The newspapers sneered at him, they called him a four-flusher, a faker, and invited him to go back to



the Coast and stay there."

But 10 months later the big fellow came east again and knocked out Bob Fitzsimmons for the heavyweight title in Coney Island.

If they could be so wrong on a Jeffries, one of the greatest of all-time, the chances of error with anybody remains great. And will continue so.

Let's look at Rocky Castellani, present-day middleweight from Cleveland, and formerly Luzerne, Pennsylvania.

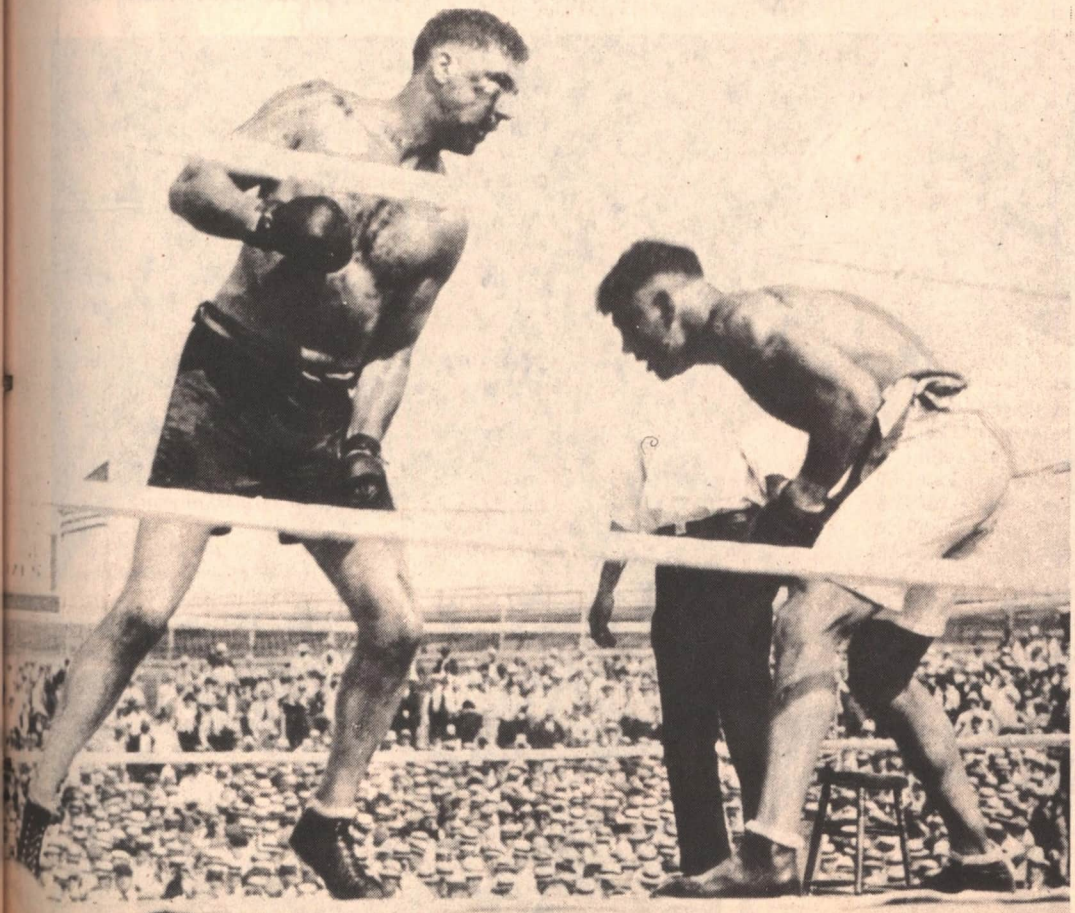
For years Rocky was roasted regularly as a safety-first fighter. "He runs, he clutches," was what you heard about him. "He wouldn't gamble with loaded dice."

Not that he didn't win, but his winning was so monotonous. It was typical of him that his two winning fights with Ernie Durando in Madison Square Garden were drab, and his one loser with Durando was a riotous sensation—and when we say riotous, we're not kidding.

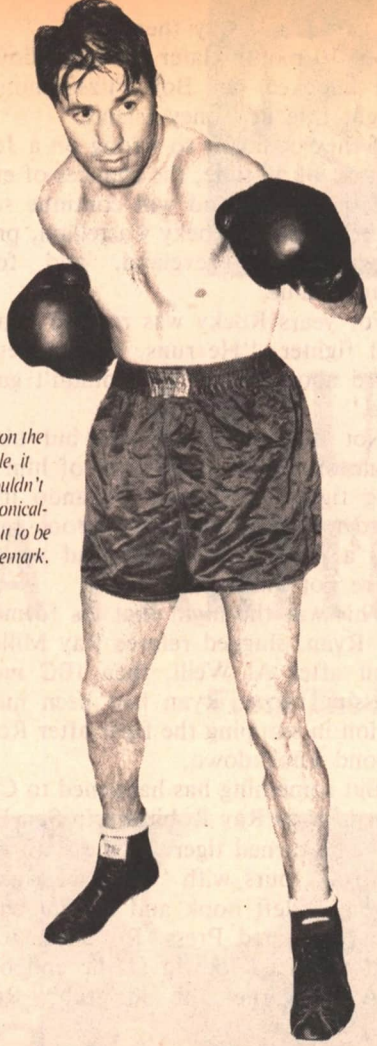
This was the night that his former manager, Tommy Ryan, slugged referee Ray Miller in the ring and went after Al Weill, then IBC matchmaker, in the dressing room. Ryan had been incensed by Miller's action in stopping the fight after Rocky got up after a second knockdown.

But something has happened to Castellani. When he faced Sugar Ray Robinson in San Francisco last summer, he turned tiger. In the sixth round, he sent Ray onto all fours with "a savage right to the head following a left hook and a right chop," according to the Associated Press. Robinson got up at nine, and just managed to win at the end of 10.

A year earlier, the old, grabby Rocky barely defeat-



Once criticized for being too cautious, middleweight Rocky Castellani, above left vs. Tiger Jones, suddenly turned into an aggressive fighter. Heavyweight champion Jess Willard, left vs. Jack Dempsey, proved his courage by rising from seven first-round knockdowns.



Before Solly Krieger won the world middleweight title, it was thought that he couldn't absorb punishment. Ironically, durability turned out to be the New Yorker's trademark.

ed Pedro Gonzales in Cleveland. This past fall, against the same opponent, he started pitching early and didn't relent. In the last round, instead of leisurely boxing to the wire, he put Pedro in such shape that the referee stopped it.

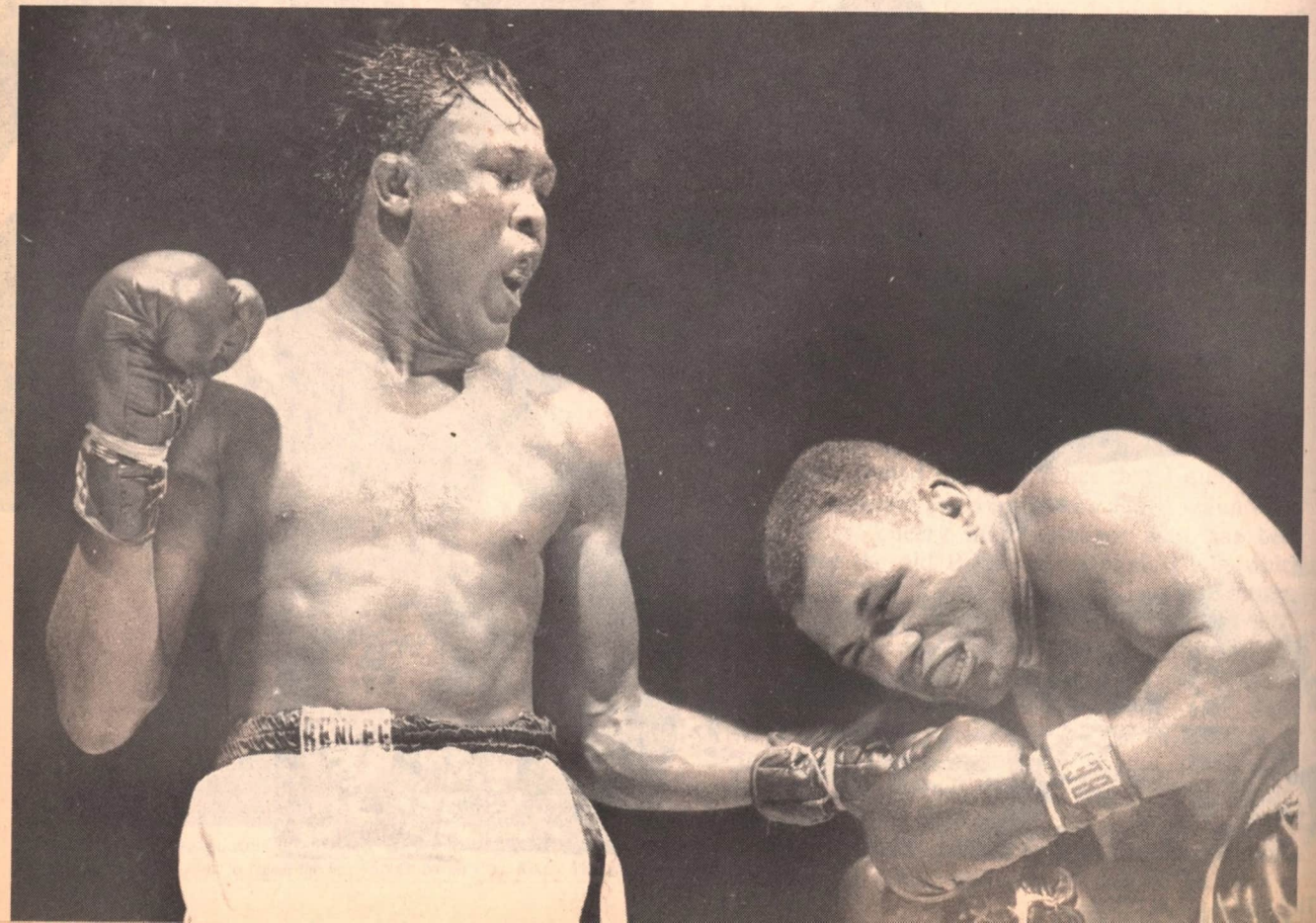
"Have I changed?" Castellani repeated. "I guess so, but I never was afraid of anybody. It was just that I knew my chin wasn't the greatest in the world and I figured I could protect it by tieing an opponent up or doing a lot of moving. I've learned since that a good offense often is the best defense."

It isn't too difficult to remember a time when Ezzard Charles was tarred by the brush of contempt. Remember his nickname, "The Gizzard"? That alone implied the rangy Cincinnati product had no stomach for rough going.

The charge was pinned on him with particular venom in 1948, on the night he stopped Joe Baksi. It was provoked by his reaction in one of the middle rounds, when Baksi dug a right into his midsection and he squirmed away, lifting his leg. Why had he done it? "Just a mannerism," was his explanation.

Of course, excessive cautiousness was a standing indictment against Ez. Charles won the heavyweight title in 1949 and reigned two years without attaining a semblance of popularity with those who demand heroism with their fisticuffs. Then, in 1954, at the age of 34, he made his first attempt to recapture the championship against Rocky Marciano at Yankee Stadium.

In the first five rounds, he electrified everyone with his purposeful forcing and self-reliant tactics. On his effort early in the sixth, he seemed headed for an unprecedented recapture but, in that round, one of Marciano's mighty right uppercuts shook him badly.



From that point on, Ez had little more than magnificent spirit. But even as a loser after 15, he had acquired public worship denied him previously.

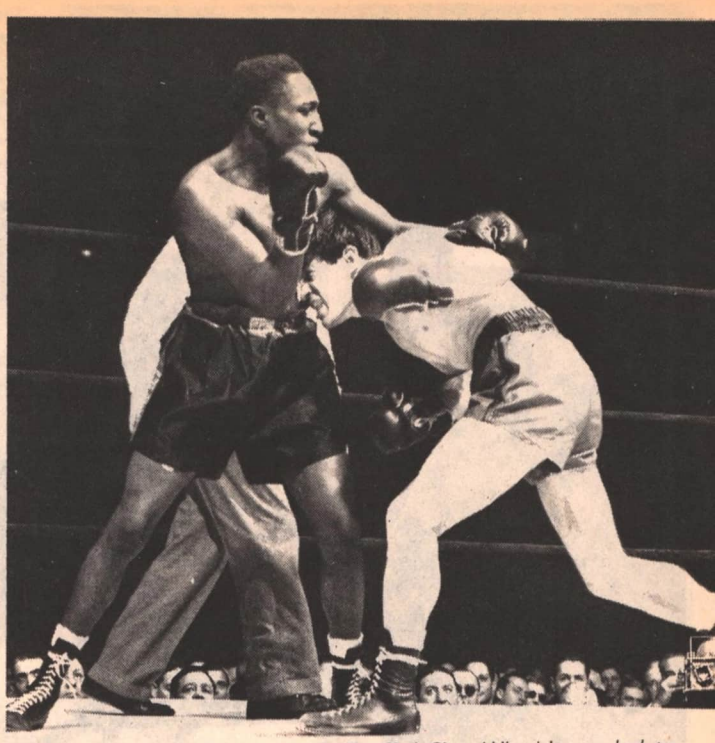
Don't ever think he didn't like it. "It's something different, all right, to know you're popular," he said shortly after that fight. "I always used to give my best, it bothered me to hear the boos. This way, you're encouraged more. I'll keep going."

The ironic part of his new attitude was that it made him continue despite an obvious physical decline. He was duck soup in a Marciano return. Johnny Holman stopped him (though he won a return), Hurricane Jackson whipped him twice in a row, Toxie Hall took his measure. And, more recently, he was stopped by a comparative novice, Young Jack Johnson.

Dipping back into an older era, Jimmy "Bowtie" Bronson, famed second, recalled Jess Willard in 1911 as "a real quitter."

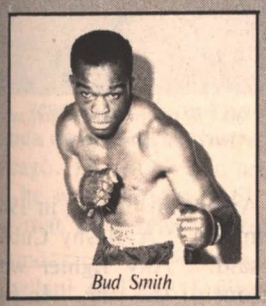
"I know," he said, "I refereed a fight that year between Willard and Joe Cox in Springfield, Missouri. Cox probably was 50, 60 pounds lighter and not the world's greatest, but he could punch, and he was giving Jess hell.

"In the fifth round, Jess wasn't liking it one bit and, when Cox would start to pen him in, he'd grab me—I didn't weigh over 125 pounds—and use me as a shield. Finally I wriggled loose and, as soon as that happened, Jess ducked through the ropes and walked



Did Rocky Graziano have heart? When the New York City middleweight came back to kayo Billy Arnold in March 1945, he began to shed his reputation as a front-runner. In his second battle with Tony Zale, his heart enabled him to win the world title.

THE RING RATINGS, *March 1956*



Bud Smith

HEAVYWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Rocky Marciano**, Brockton, MA

1. **Archie Moore**, San Diego, CA
2. **Bob Baker**, Pittsburgh, PA
3. **Tommy Jackson**, Far Rockaway, NY
4. **John Holman**, Chicago, IL
5. **Willie Pastrano**, New Orleans, LA
6. **Nino Valdes**, Cuba
7. **Johnny Summerlin**, Detroit, MI
8. **Bob Satterfield**, Chicago, IL
9. **Young Jack Johnson**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Ezzard Charles**, Cincinnati, OH

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Archie Moore**, San Diego, CA

1. **Floyd Patterson**, Brooklyn, NY
2. **Yolande Pompey**, Trinidad, BWI
3. **Gerhard Hecht**, Germany
4. **Willi Hoepner**, Germany
5. **Chuck Speiser**, Lansing, MI
6. **Joey Maxim**, Cleveland, OH
7. **Harold Johnson**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Albert Finch**, England
9. **Charles Colin**, France
10. **Dave Whitlock**, San Francisco, CA

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Ray Robinson**, New York, NY

1. **Carl (Bobo) Olson**, Honolulu, HI
2. **Charley Humez**, France
3. **Eduardo Lausse**, Argentina
4. **Milo Savage**, Salt Lake City, UT
5. **Rocky Castellani**, Cleveland, OH
6. **Holly Mims**, Washington, D.C.
7. **Gene Fullmer**, West Jordan, UT
8. **Bobby Boyd**, Chicago, IL
9. **Ralph Jones**, Yonkers, NY
10. **Artie Towne**, New York, NY

WELTERWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Carmen Basilio**, Syracuse, NY

1. **Tony DeMarco**, Boston, MA
2. **Johnny Saxton**, Brooklyn, NY
3. **Ramon Fuentes**, Los Angeles, CA
4. **Vince Martinez**, Paterson, NJ
5. **Isaac Logart**, Cuba
6. **Virgil Akins**, St. Louis, MO
7. **Del Flanagan**, St. Paul, MN
8. **George Barnes**, Australia
9. **Art Aragon**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Joe Miceli**, New York, NY

LIGHTWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Wallace (Bud) Smith**, Cincinnati, OH

1. **Duilio Loi**, Italy
2. **James Carter**, New York, NY
3. **Frankie Ryff**, New York, NY
4. **Ralph Dupas**, New Orleans, LA
5. **Ludwig Lightburn**, British Honduras
6. **Johnny Gonsalves**, Oakland, CA
7. **Cisco Andrade**, Compton, CA
8. **Kenny Lane**, Muskegon, MI
9. **Orlando Zulueta**, Cuba
10. **Joe Lopes**, Sacramento, CA

FEATHERWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Sandy Saddler**, New York, NY

1. **Fred Galiana**, Spain
2. **Carmelo Costa**, Brooklyn, NY
3. **Ciro Morasen**, Cuba
4. **Hogan (Kid) Bassey**, Nigeria
5. **Gabriel (Flash) Elorde**, Philippines
6. **Ray Famechon**, France
7. **Martin Rodriguez**, Cuba
8. **Victor (Sonny) Leon**, Venezuela
9. **Teddy Davis**, Hartford, CT
10. **Paul Jorgensen**, Port Arthur, TX

BANTAMWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Robert Cohen**, France

1. **Mario D'Agata**, Italy
2. **Billy Peacock**, Los Angeles, CA
3. **Raul (Raton) Macias**, Mexico
4. **Andre Valignat**, France
5. **Emil Chemama**, France
6. **Little Cezar**, Philippines
7. **Jose Lopez**, Mexico
8. **Pierre Cossemyns**, Belgium
9. **Peter Keenan**, Scotland
10. **Fili Nava**, Mexico

FLYWEIGHTS

World Champ: **Pascual Perez**, Argentina

1. **Young Martin**, Spain
2. **Leo Espinosa**, Philippines
3. **Danny Kid**, Philippines
4. **Dai Dower**, Wales
5. **Tanny Campo**, Philippines
6. **Jake Tuli**, South Africa
7. **Oscar Suarez**, Cuba
8. **Memo Diez**, Mexico
9. **Hitoshi Misako**, Japan
10. **Guy Schatt**, France

Cuban welterweight Isaac Logart is examined before his battle with rugged Gil Turner. Logart's blood pressure was normal, and while in battle he proved that his heart was in working order, too. He met Turner on his opponent's terms—in the corners and at close range—and emerged victorious, proving that he was much more than just a stylist.

up the aisle toward the dressing room.

"Billy McCarney, my old partner, met him—Billy was promoting the show—and said, 'Jess, what are you doing? You're not getting hurt.' Willard looked down at him and said, 'Billy, it's a wise man who knows enough to quit before he gets hurt.' "

But Bronson acknowledges that Willard was a changed man the day he faced Jack Dempsey at Toledo in 1919.

"I had to take my hat off to him," Jimmy reported. "He went out like a real champion. He was down seven times in the first round, butchered by the most tigerish puncher in the annals of the game.

"Everybody talks of the fact that Dempsey thought the fight was over after that round and had to be called back after going out of the ring. But hardly anybody remarks about the fact that Willard was ready to go on when Dempsey got back. Yes siree, he was game, he took another two rounds of savage battering before he gave up. And when he did, believe me, he had no choice, he was a wreck."

In the modern generation, there have been other illustrations. Solly Krieger, the middleweight, often was rapped in his early years as a guy who just didn't like to take it. When he came to maturity, he proved to be an iron man. Only durability enabled him to beat Al Hostak for the NBA title. To the end of his career, he retained belated admiration for this quality so absent in the beginning.

Kid Gavilan's entrance to American boxing in 1946 was accompanied by flip remarks. "A flashy Cuban with a fancy bolo," they said. "Any fighter with determination can chase him out of the ring." In two fights with Johnny Williams he was a winner, but it looked like the wise guys were right—a showboat he was, not interested in taking one to give one.

Then, one night at old St. Nick's, Gavvy was dropped in with Gene Burton, then considered a sound piece of ring machinery. But instead of folding, he outgutted Burton. From there, he soared like a shooting star; his unquenchable competitive fire became the stock in trade that eventually led him to the welterweight title.

And what about that TV acting genius and autobiographical literary light, Rocky Graziano? Do you know what they thought of him as a fighter when he was a plain juvenile delinquent?

Everybody on West 49th Street said it this way: "No heart, if he don't get you in a hurry, he folds; never get anywhere, what does Irving Cohen expect to do with that bum?"

That view prevailed without suggestion of contradiction right into his fight with Billy Arnold, well-regarded Philadelphia puncher, early in 1945. It seemed more accurate than ever after two rounds. Arnold was macing him with right hands, bloodying

his nose. "I never had anybody more hopeless," admitted second Whitey Bimstein, speaking the other day of his experience in the corner that night.

Somehow, in the third round, Graziano came up with a right that shook Arnold to his heels. He was on Billy like a cat. The finisher he applied lit up the sky.

After that there was a flock of successes for Rocky, but the legend that there was hound in him persisted. It flamed into the limelight in his first middleweight title fight with Tony Zale. Recall the situation?

Zale, just back from long war-time Navy service, floundered in the first round under Graziano's rain of blows. At the bell, Tony was down and bloodied. Rocky's hammering didn't let up in the second, third, or fourth. Faint hearts were calling for it to be stopped.

Zale came back slightly in the fifth, but in the sixth he unleashed a left to the body and a right to the chin, and Graziano sat down on his haunches. For a count of nine he remained there, a silly grin on his face. Just as the referee's hand went up to record 10, Rocky started to rise. But he was late, and he was counted out.

Once more the knockers let him have it, and when he got another chance at Zale the next year, in Chicago, they made it a cinch he would chuck it under fire.

The match, indoors in frightful heat, for a while developed along expected lines. Zale was punishing Rocky cruelly, had him cut and backing away. However, in the third, when he seemed worst off, Graziano managed to get home a clubbing right. All of Zale's years appeared to come to the surface at once. It was downhill from there, and in the sixth, the referee halted it as Tony fell limp over the ropes.

A year later Zale knocked out Graziano in three rounds at Newark, but the mold had been cast in Chicago. The Rock had seen the last of his detractors, and he was "Goom-Bah" to his idolators, an affection that he carries on today in his TV eminence.

Among current fighters, there are others aside from Castellani and the fading Charles who have had to live down the label of alleged disinterest in stiff combat. Vince Martinez, the classy welter, long had been tagged as a chap who'd lose heart easily. It was based on his backpedaling style and apparent confusion when crowded. That has passed. Now, under fire, he storms back with brilliant displays of effective punching. His recommendation is no longer limited to saying, "He looks good." Now they say, "He *is* good."

Only a few months ago Isaac Logart, a Cuban welter, began to lift his head above the rank and file. For a first-line test, the IBC matched him with Gil Turner, for whom the word is always valiant. Then you heard it: "Logart has a lot of good stuff, nice hands, fast legs." And in a lower voice: "But not game. Turner's ticker will be too much for him."

As predicted, Logart went into the lead. Turner put the pressure on. Logart didn't back up. On the ropes and in the corners, Gil's favorite playground, he met fire with fire.

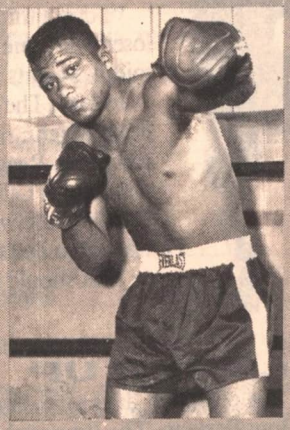
At the finish, it was Logart, the winner, a new national name. But more than that, it was another example refuting a "chicken" canard. Never forget it, no coward puts on the gloves. ■

THE RING, March 1956

The Cover: Two all-time greats, Sugar Ray Robinson and Rocky Marciano, grace the cover. Robinson is shown knocking out Bobo Olson, against whom he regained the middleweight title. In a story by Daniel M. Daniel, Marciano is chosen, along with Joe DiMaggio, as the greatest Italian-American athlete in history.

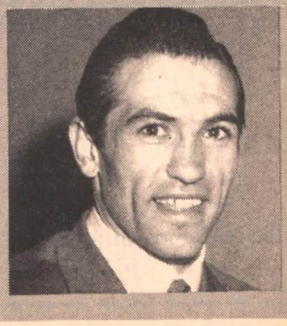
Comebacking Kings: With middleweight champion Sugar Ray Robinson's remarkable return still fresh in his memory, Jersey Jones looks at boxing's successful comebacks. Among those examined: Jersey Joe Walcott, Jim Braddock (pictured), and Billy Petrolle.

Mexico's Mighty Mites: Lew Eskin looks at the slew of Mexican prospects who are poised to invade the rankings at fly, bantam, and featherweight. The fight game is quickly growing south of the border. Writes Jones: "Mexico City has two weekly clubs, and in more than 50 other cities below the Rio Grande, boxing bouts are being staged regularly." Pictured: Billy Peacock and Mexican NBA bantamweight champion Raul "Raton" Macias.



Too Young To Win: Twenty-one-year-old Floyd Patterson (pictured) has declared that he's ready for a shot at heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano. With that in mind, Murray Goodman looks at prospects who were ruined by premature tests against stronger, older fighters. Some of his examples: Tony Janiro (vs. Jake LaMotta), LaVerne Roach (vs. Marcel Cerdan), and Billy Arnold (vs. Fritzie Zivic).

Fighter Of The Month: Argentine flyweight champion Pascual Perez is chosen for his successful defense against Leo Espinosa at Luna Park in Buenos Aires. Runner-up: heavyweight Johnny Holman, who kayoed Bob Satterfield in the eighth round.



Looking Ahead

By Robert Cassidy & Steve Farhood

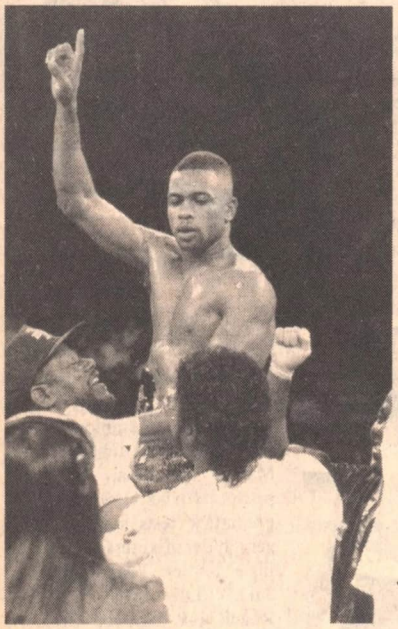
King: Back in the big game

A KING-SIZED BID

Don King reentered the heavyweight picture when he won the WBC's purse bid to promote Lennox Lewis' mandatory defense vs. Tony Tucker. Was it curious that King's bid of $12,160,000 topped Main Events' offer by only about $100,000? After all, it's anticipated that King, who promotes Tucker, will bring the bout to Las Vegas, forcing Lewis to fight on the road. But according to Main Events' Kathy Duva, there was a simple explanation.

"Purse bidding is more of an exact science than people realize," she told *The Ring*. "My husband [promoter Dan Duva] had left the house planning to bid $10-million, but on the plane he remembered something Showtime [King's partner in the promotion] had said to him in negotiations. He refigured what the fight was worth. The only variable is pay-per-view sales, and he knew what Showtime was going to charge for the fight. So he did the math, and so did they."

So, for all the skeptics, *that's* why the bids were so close.



Jones: Ready for the title

ACCELERATING A RIVALRY

On February 17, newly crowned IBF super middleweight champion James Toney did what everyone expected: He vacated the IBF middleweight title. In doing so, Toney cleared the way for a title showdown between number-one contender Bernard Hopkins and number-two Roy Jones.

Hopkins and Jones, a combined 43-1 (37), are two of the most exciting middleweights in the world. And while promoters usually prefer to let a rivalry like this stir for a while, the sport will likely soon benefit from the best 160-pound matchup since Toney fought Mike McCallum in 1991. The IBF's Bob Lee Jr. said the Hopkins-Jones match should be made within 30 to 60 days.

"I don't think either one of them will turn down a title fight," said Lee. "The loser will come out in pretty good shape. He'll still be one of the top two or three middleweights in the world."

Indeed. The IBF's third-rated middleweight, McCallum, is fighting at light heavyweight; number-four Sumbu Kalambay is mandatory challenger to WBA champion Reggie Johnson; number-five Lamar Parks already lost to Johnson; number-six Gilbert Baptist was decisioned by Hopkins in February; number-seven Glenn Wolfe was knocked out by Jones in February; and number-eight Bret Lally was scheduled to meet Vinny Pazienza in March.

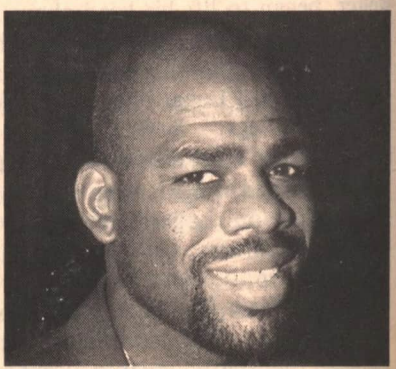
That should make life comfortable for the Hopkins-Jones winner *and* loser.

LISTEN UP

A couple of days after **James Toney** knocked off **Iran Barkley**, *The Ring* spoke with **Stan Hoffman**, "The Blade's" manager. The obvious question: Does Barkley have any more good fights left in him?

"I honestly don't know," Hoffman said. "My gut feeling is that he'll say he can't make 168 pounds anymore and he'll go up to light heavyweight."

Hoffman added that in preparing for Toney, Barkley reduced from "close to 205 or 210" to 168, and lost six pounds the day of the weigh-in. ■



Barkley: Back to light heavy

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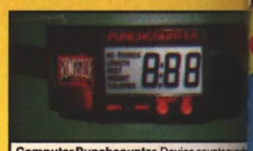

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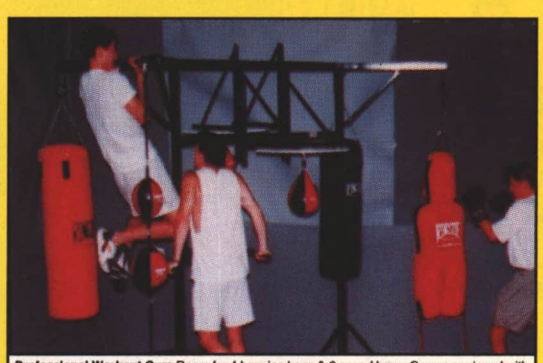

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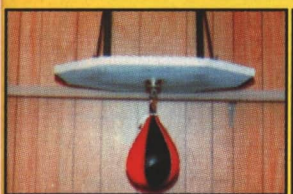

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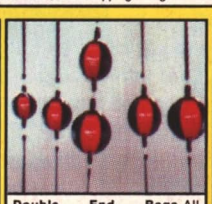

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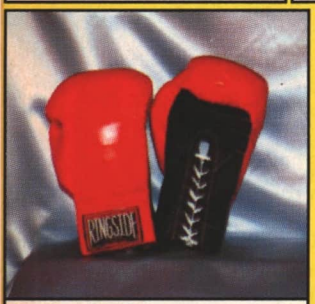

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